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3d Artist

Jaime Jones

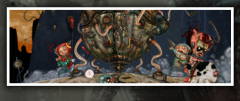
Being home to some of the most talented artist around, read our latest interview with the Concept Artist; Jaime Jones and also Art Producer, Shawn Sharp from Arenanet



ARTICLES
Skectbook of Serg S



INTERVIEWS
Shawn Sharp, Jaime Jones, Kev Crossley & Nick Percival



GALLERIES
WanKok Leong, Marcel Baumann & Nykolai Aleksander plus more!



MAKING OF'S
Late Afternoon by Andreas Rocha plus more!



TUTORIALS
Speed Painting: 'Man-eating plants!' by Ignacio Bazán Lazcano & Daniel Ljunggren



EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to **ISSUE 028** of 2D Artist! Spring is officially upon us, bringing with it the famously erratic April weather. To keep your spirits up through this turbulent time of wind, rain and snow (yes, we really have had snow here in UK in April!), we've got an issue which is jammed-packed with the best artwork, articles and artists that we can find. This is the month of the Making Of, with not one, not two, not even three, but four fantastic articles that delve into the creative process behind our favourite pieces of artwork. Anne Pogoda returns to talk us through the creation of her inspiring matte painting "Stranded" and on **PAGE 147**, Andreas Rocha tries out different painting techniques with "Late Afternoon". And if you like Andreas' work, look out for an interview with him in the May issue of 2D Artist where we find out what makes this digital artist tick! We also revisit the Guild War franchise this month, in a pair of in-depth interviews with Arena.net Art Producer Shawn Sharp (**PAGE 09**) and Arena.net Concept Artist Jaime Jones (**PAGE 21**). Over on the other side of the Atlantic, British artist Kev Crossley discusses how he reconnected with what he loved about art and on **PAGE 46**, veteran 2000AD artist Nick Percival talks about freelancing, comic books, animated projects and just about everything else under the sun! For those of you who have been eagerly following our tutorials, Mike Corriero moves onto the conception and creation of imaginary creatures in the second part of his Creature Concept Design series, while on **PAGE 108**, Tiberius Viris makes the most of April's unsettling weather and shows us how to convert a sunny image into a breathtaking storm scene. And if those tutorials aren't enough for you, why not check out our Speed Painting challenge on **PAGE 97**, where last month's interviewee Daniel Ljunggren, along with conceptual artist Ignacio Bazán Lazcano, tries his hand at answering the "Man-eating plants!" brief, with the usual entertaining results! There's plenty to get your teeth into this month, so simply sit back, relax, and head on over to the contents on the right to experience the best that the CG world has to offer!

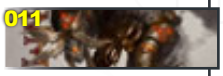
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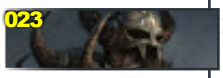
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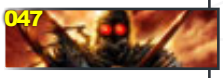
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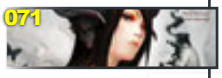
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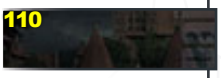

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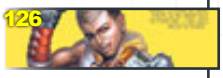

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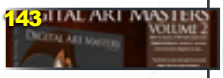

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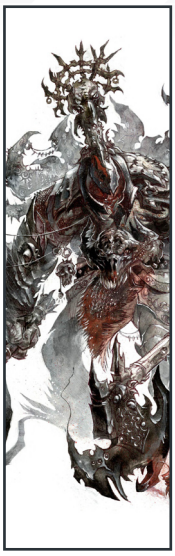
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Every month, many creatives and artists around the world contribut to 3DCreative & 2DArtist Magazine. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact lynette@zoopublishing





KEV CROSSLEY

was born in the North of England in the early 70's and by the age of four learned that a monster lived in the abandoned house down the street. After that he saw monsters everywhere, so rather than go mad he decided to make a living drawing them instead. His services are employed by the Games Industry and anyone else who needs monsters in their products.

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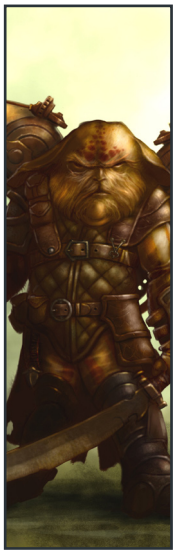


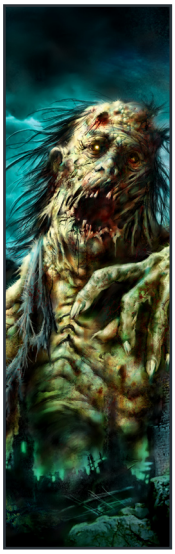
SHAWN SHARP

Shawn started out in advertising as an illustrator and graphic designer. Eventually work in traditional pen and paper RPG companies led to a job offer to art direct computer games in 1990. He's now the art department producer at ArenaNet, makers of Guild Wars.

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NICK PERCIVAL

is an award-winning artist with work that covers concept and production art for film, TV, videogames and a regular output of moody comic book art. Specializing in character and creature design, his clients include MTV, Marvel Comics, EA, Activision, 2000AD, Upper Deck, Wizards of the Coast and many others. He is currently developing his own original projects for Film and animation and is preparing for the day when monsters will rule the earth

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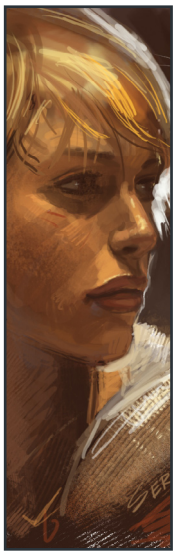


SERG.S

was born in St. Petersburg, Russia and moved to the United States when he was about ten. He has studied illustration, fine art and design at various institutions and now works as a concept artist for the video game/film industry. He's currently with Interplay working on Fallout Online. In his spare time he started a forum to educate and discover new Visual Development artists in So.Cal.

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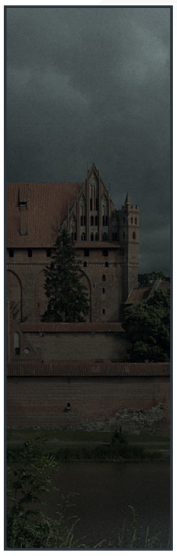
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TIBERIUS VIRIS

is currently working as a Freelance Matte Painter/CG Artist for both the feature film and games industries, and also as an Environment Illustrator for various projects and clients. His work has also been featured in several prestigious books, such as Expose 5 and D'Artiste Matte Painting 2.

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DANIEL LJUNGGREN



works as a Concept Artist and 3d Artist at Avalanche Studios, in Sweden. He has been working in the games industry for about seven years and enjoys it now more than ever. Daniel prefers creating paintings that are fictional and that will trigger the viewers' imaginations.

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MIKE CORRIERO

currently produces assets as a freelance Artist for various companies including everything from creatures, environments, structures, illustrations and icons. His work has been featured in a number of promotional outlets, including ImagineFX, Ballistic Publishing's Expose 4 and 5 and Painter Books, Corel Painter X and Design 360 (China). His client list includes Radical Entertainment, ImagineFX and Liquid Development.

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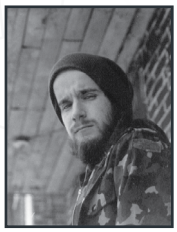


IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO



is a Concept Artist/Digital Illustrator in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He worked as a Game Artist and Illustrator for 4 years, and now works as a Concept Artist. He's worked for NGD Studios, Globalfun, Gameloft and now works with Timegate Studios and Sabarasa Entertainment.

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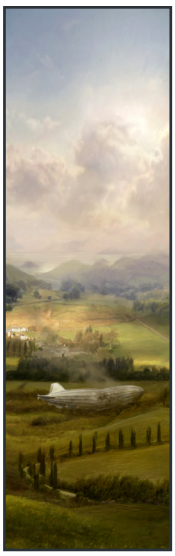


NICOLAS FRANCOEUR

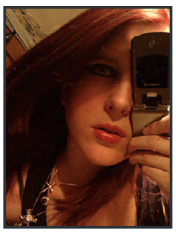
is a Montreal based Concept Artist & Illustrator. Since leaving school in 2006 he's works at ODD1, an Indie game studio, as well as doing freelance jobs. He is mainly self-taught and his main "weapon" is Photoshop, although he is still addicted to his trusty pencils.

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ANNE POGODA



Is a 2D artist working on concepts, illustrations and such. She graduated from the Art Akademy and now works freelance in Berlin, Germany. Anne made her first attempts at digital art in 2003. For 3 years she has been working on 2D illustrations and concept art with a Wacom Graphire in Photoshop and Painter. She will also be learning ZBrush 3 and Maya and would like to do some game or film related stuff later.

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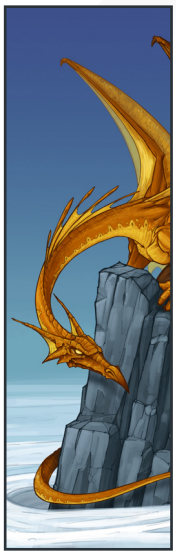


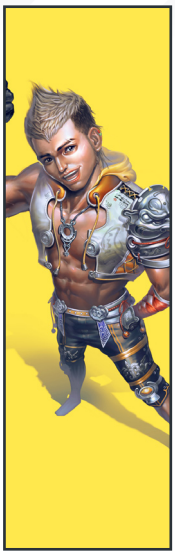
MIKE BOHMAN

is currently a full-time Flash developer and a part-time Illustrator. He hopes to switch that around someday and illustrate full-time. After his day job, he freelances from his home in Pleasant Grove, Utah. Mike illustrates regularly for Utah Business Magazine, though he prefers to work on things less corporate. Mike has illustrated one children's book and would love to do more!

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YUCHENG HONG



is a Concept Artist, Graphic Designer & Illustrator. His background is in Graphic Design and 3D Animation, and after graduating his first job in the industry was 3D Modeller. He feels he has more passion for Concept Design and he was lucky, because he now work as a Concept Artist in a game company!

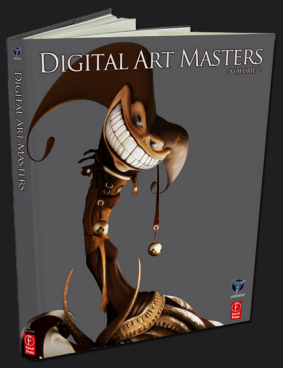
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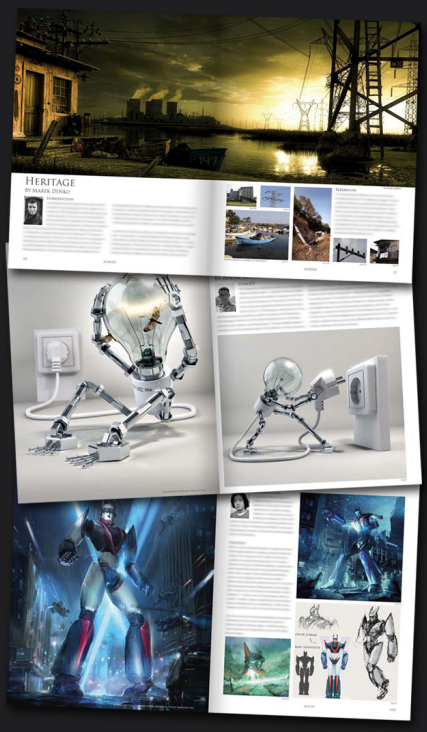


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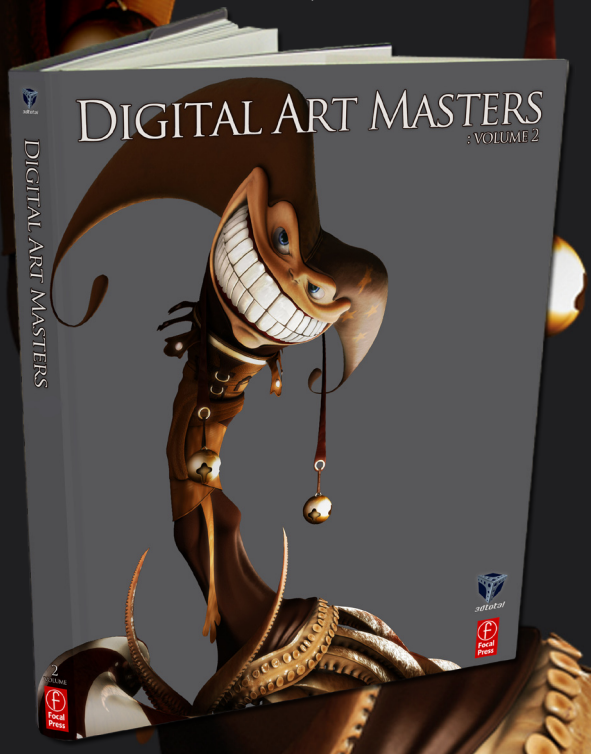
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Shawn Sharp

"One thing I would say is that, in my line of work, I use concept art to convey a concept not wow someone with a portfolio piece."



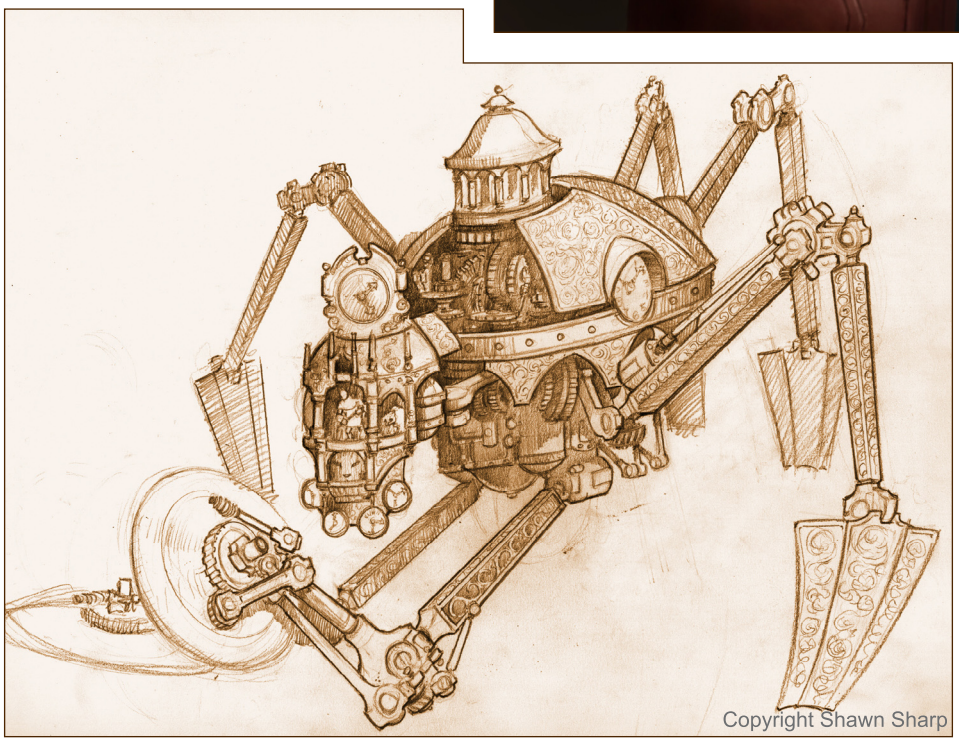
From doing all the things no one else wants to do, with the aid of numerous amounts of espresso, we chat with Art Producer for Arena.net Shawn Sharp about how it all started for him in the world of 3D

SHAWN SHARP


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Hello Shawn, could you tell us a bit about yourself please and why you decided to go into 2D?

Well, I started out in the early to mid 80's working in advertising as a graphic designer and illustrator (I was also writing and pencilling comic books on the side at the time, but they were so awful that we need don't talk about that). However, I was also doing a lot of illustrations for pen and paper role-playing companies. When I moved from Pittsburgh to Portland this work was noticed by what was then a small start-up computer games company in Eugene, Oregon – Dynamix. I think that was 1989. They offered me a job: to come and be the art director of something called a computer game. Since I had no idea that people played games on computers, had just moved to Portland and was in the process of setting up a design studio there, I turned them down. When they contacted me again a year later, I was a bit more in the know and decided to give it a shot.


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Anyway, while I work in 3D as well, my first love has always been illustration and concept art - so in many ways I still find myself gravitating towards that. As an art director I typically did double duty as the sole concept artist as well, but even when games moved to 3D, it was still necessary to use 2D in the concept stages.

I would meet with the designers to understand what they were trying to accomplish, break it down into a list of assets and sketch out



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characters, scenes, storyboards, backgrounds etc as a means of saying, “Here’s what you’re asking for.” Or sometimes, “I know what you’re asking for but here’s what you actually want.” Then of course these same images are used to explain to the art staff what we need out of the graphics.

As for ‘deciding’ to go 2D, well when I started out there was (for all intents and purposes) no 3D to speak of. At least not as we think of it now in the games industry. So I didn’t have much of a choice!

Did you ever regret turning down the position that Dynamix offered you initially, or did the process of setting up a design studio prove to be an invaluable learning curve?

I think it was the right decision to turn the job down the first time around. Setting up the studio afforded me a certain amount of exposure, good or bad, to aspects of the business world that I hadn’t really dealt with previously.


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You’re currently an Art Producer for ArenaNet. How does this position compare to your previous rolls as Art Director for Dynamix and Big Sky Interactive?

In many ways there’s a lot of cross-over. The position has also evolved a great deal over the past 5 years. Early on, I was doing a lot of the concept work and as such, I was sort of the conduit between the design and art departments. As we grew we brought on an entire staff of concept artists and my focus changed. Now I’m less involved in the exact look of each asset and more involved in how it relates to the needs of the overall game design (does it serve its intended purpose, schedules, milestones, outsourcing, keeping the design and art departments on the same page, lines of communication etc). Again, much of this is

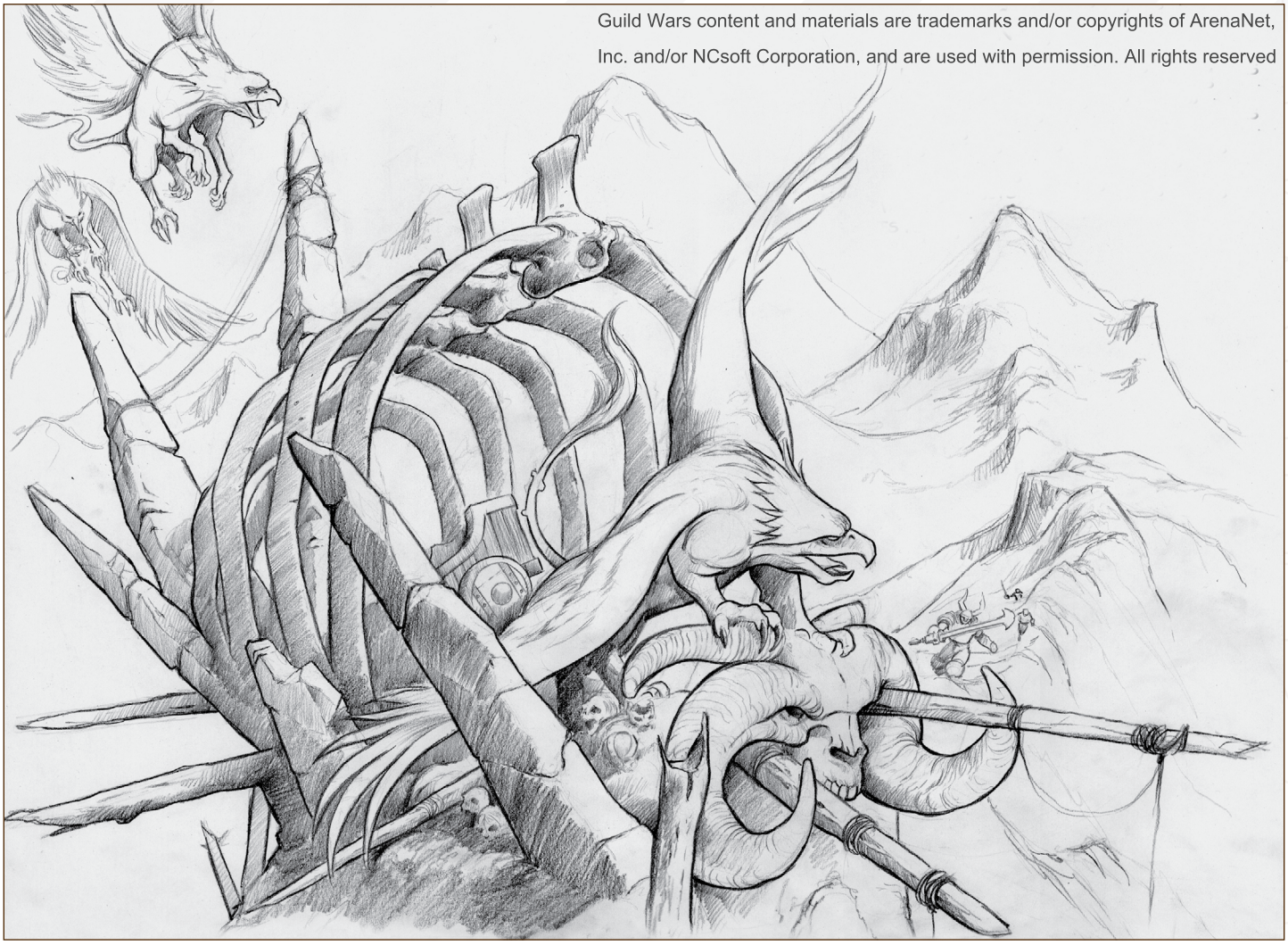


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what I've always done as an art director, but with projects the size and complexity of Guild Wars it's becoming increasingly difficult to be wearing so many hats.

You have recently done some work on the Guild Wars game - could you tell us a bit on your involvement in the game?

Overall I'd say that the above answer pretty much covers it. My boilerplate answer to this question is typical: "I do all the stuff no one else wants to do." While I try, from time-to-time, to do some concept work and creature and character modelling, I mostly spend my days in meetings, writing emails, updating spreadsheets and dealing with outsourcing what we can't produce internally.

Do you think this is the direction that you wish your career to take, or would you still prefer to spend your hours, Stylus in hand, drawing?

Oh I would certainly prefer spending more time with a stylus in my hand. I tell people that I basically fell into this position due to the fact that there was a need and no one else was filling it. As much as the artist in me loves the idea of art simply 'happening' as a result of an organic-like process of inspiration and collaboration, the truth is that's just not the



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way games get made. Someone needs to be thinking in terms of how art, design and technology can support one another and how this translates into asset lists, milestones, budgets, dependencies and all of that fun stuff.

So what are you currently working on at the moment at ArenaNet?
Guild Wars 2. Um, beyond that I can't really go into much detail. I still try to do a little concept work but that, and any and all other art I can squeeze in, is done in the evenings and the occasional weekend.

Throughout your career you must have worked on a variety of different games. Do you think Guildwars and such MMOs are the future, or do you feel that there's still a certain appeal to blasting zombies with a BFG?
I think there will always be a market for both. At least I hope so, since I'm sitting firmly in both camps. Both certainly have diehard fans, but there's also a lot of overlap. For me, it sort of depends on my frame of mind and how much time I have available. If I only have a few minutes, I may just jump in and kill some zombies; if I have time to immerse myself in something then it's more likely to be an RPG.





If you could sum up your style of work in one sentence, what would it be?
I may have to come back to this; I've never really thought about it before. Like everyone I suppose, I try to tell a story. One thing I would say is that, in my line of work, I use concept art to convey a concept, not to wow someone with a portfolio piece. If it gets the idea across then it was successful and at that point the piece is as detailed and finished as it is likely to get.

Throughout an artist's career, they will always look at artwork by their favourite artist, whether it's for research or for inspiration. So where do you draw inspiration from?
You know, I still find myself inspired by the artists that I was a fan of when I was just starting out: Frank Frazetta, Mike Kaluta, Berni Wrightson, Barry Windsore Smith. But really,





there's just far too many more recent folks to even mention. To me that's one of the most incredible things about the Internet - I'm never at a loss for inspiration or references. Pretty much any artist and any subject matter is at your fingertips.

Well it has been a pleasure talking with you, but one last question before we round things up. If I were to hang around with you for a whole day, what one thing would I learn about you?

That I drink waaaaay too much espresso.

SHAWN SHARP

For more work by this artist please visit:
shawnsharp.blogspot.com
Or contact them at:
shawn@arena.net
Interviewed by: Chris Perrins

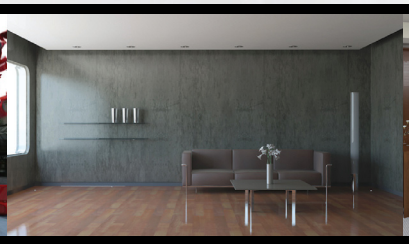
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"HAVING TALENTED PEOPLE WORKING WITH YOU IN THE SAME ROOM ON A DAILY BASIS MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE."
Jaime Jones
Jaime Jones has a background in illustration and has worked for both gaming and comic book companies. Since 2006 he has been employed as a concept artist at Arenanet, a games company responsible for the Guild Wars franchise. His portfolio covers both characters and environment designs set in fantastic worlds, and displays a rich and imaginative style.
Copyright Arenanet, for Guild Wars: Eye of the North

Jaime Jones



Copyright Arenanet, for Guild Wars: Eye of the North

The Guild Wars franchise seems to be a great project for creative people. What has been the best part of working on these games?

The world for these games is expansive. I've really enjoyed the huge variety of art it takes to fill the environments. I never know what I'll be painting next, but, its rarely something I've done before.



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Do you find it a challenge to have to paint new things all the time, or is that part of the attraction of your job? And are there people who are more skilled at depicting certain subjects and who will tend to be assigned those topics?

I love the variety of subjects - the challenge is very appealing to me. We all have our strengths, and assignments tend to go out based on what we've done well in the past. There is a lot of flexibility though, so it's easy to request assignments that will force me in new directions. Even with an assignment that seems redundant, I'm faced with an opportunity to solve it in a different way.



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Copyright Arenanet

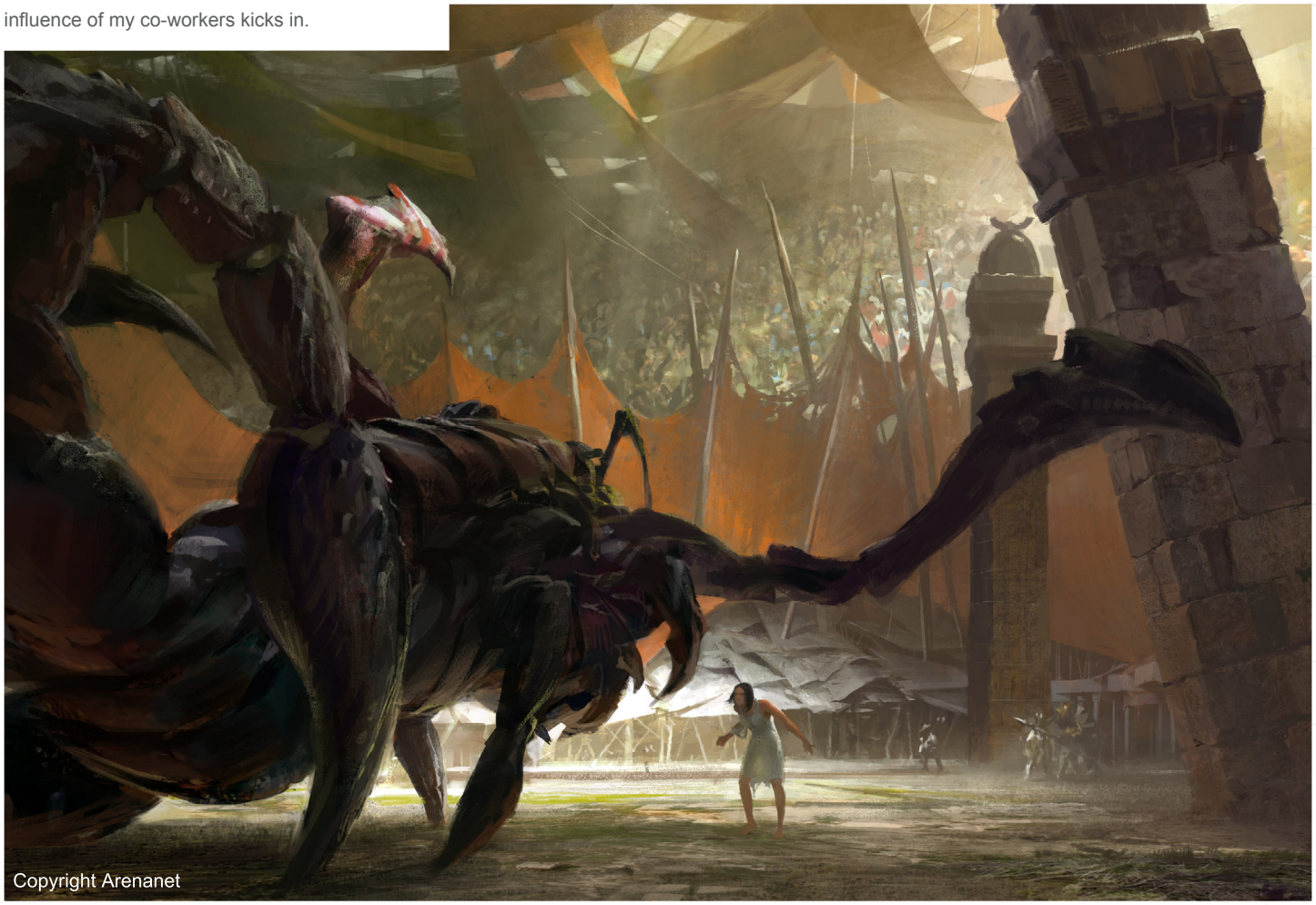
There seem to be a large number of comic artists who have made the transition to working as concept artists for gaming companies. Why do you think this is and how does it compare to being a freelance artist?

It probably comes down to the health of the two industries. I think there are more people playing games than reading comic books nowadays. I guess illustrators migrate to where the money is. I really enjoy working in-house; I'm surrounded by friends and teachers and having talented people working with you in the same room on a daily basis makes a big difference.



You say that working in-house makes a big difference. Is that to say that your artistic development, and maybe even style to a lesser degree, is dependant on those around you? Or are you simply referring to feedback?

I'd say both my development and style are dependent on those around me. In my work over the past two years, its obvious where the influence of my co-workers kicks in.



Copyright Arenanet

You have a number of fantasy environments in your portfolio that have a realistic authenticity about them. Do you do a fair amount of research before beginning the painting phase and what are the general approaches you take?

I do a lot of research. My best work is built on what I've learned about real people and places. There was I time when I felt like it was cheating to use references. I think a lot of students go through that phase, but it doesn't make much sense in a commercial setting.

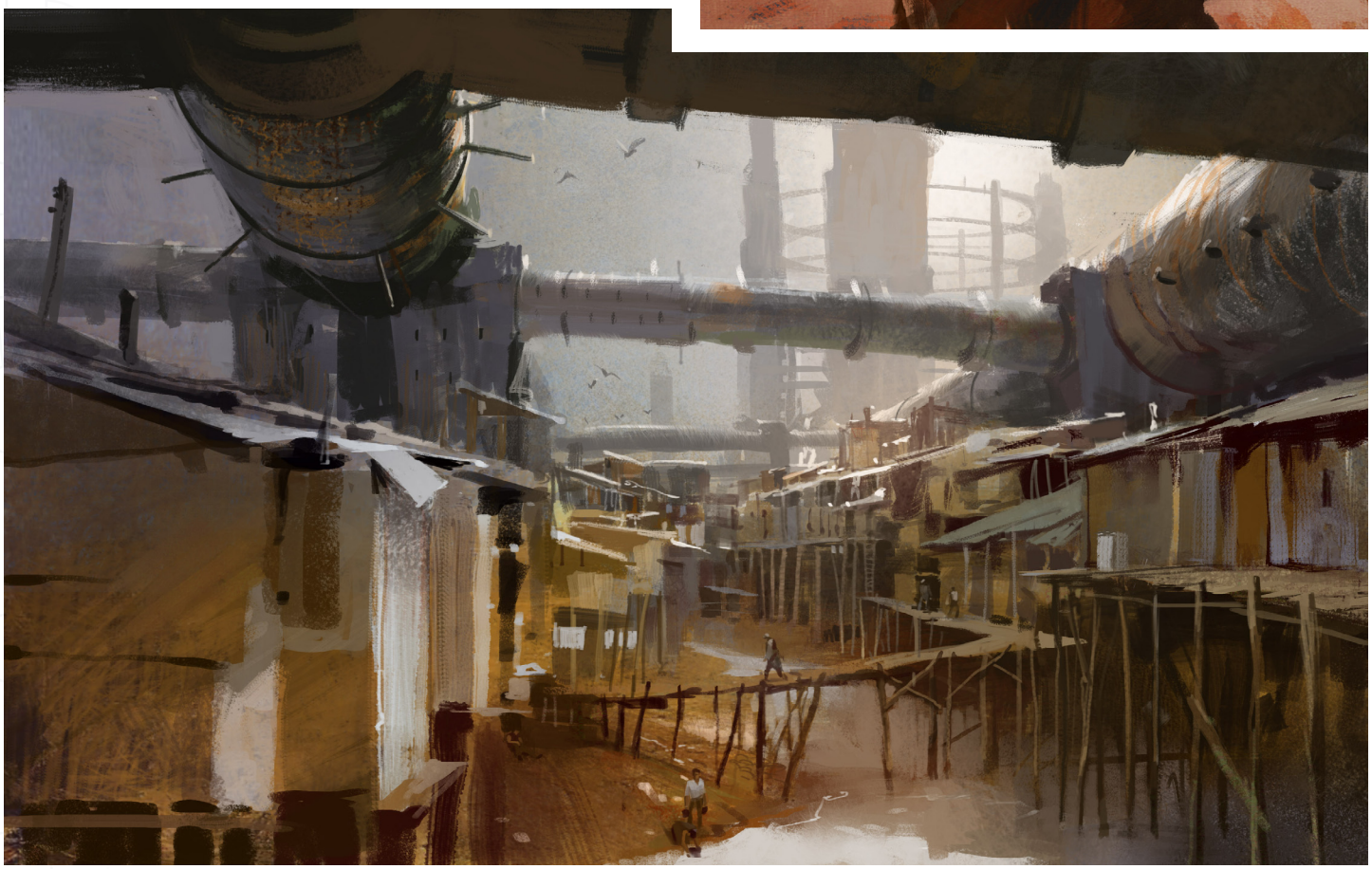


Do you also use references for your figure work or do you rely on general picture libraries and such? I know some concept artists get colleagues to pose for photos in order to achieve a certain level of accuracy.

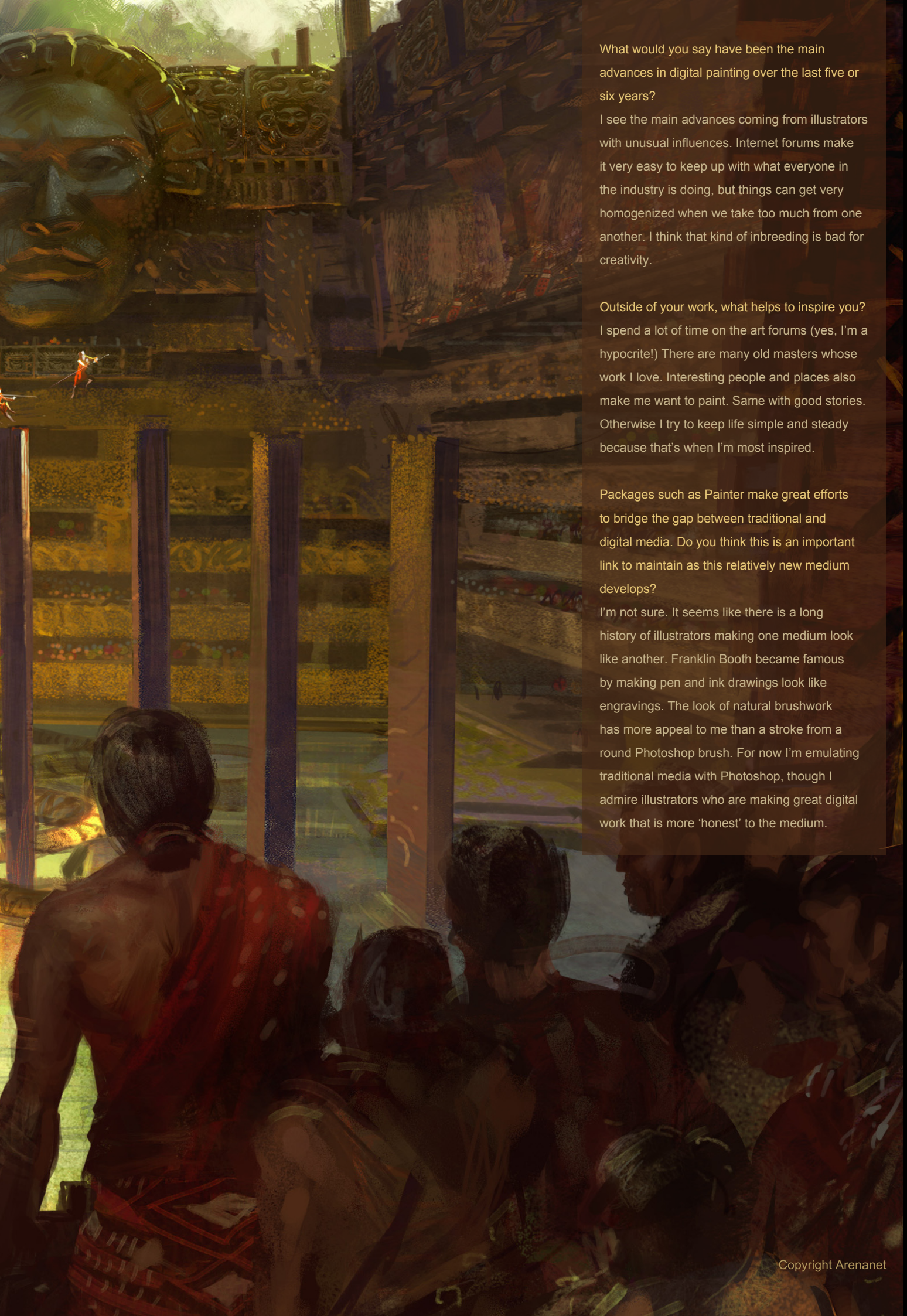
I haven't posed colleagues, but it's not a bad idea. I mostly come up with poses from memory.

There is a rich textural quality to your digital work. Do you spend much time creating customized brushes for painting aspects such as clouds and rock? Which would you say prove consistently useful throughout?

I do make a lot of custom brushes. I have fun trying to get different shapes and textures out of them. The most useful brushes are always the most versatile ones - normally just a variation on a hard oval brush with a little texture.







What would you say have been the main advances in digital painting over the last five or six years?

I see the main advances coming from illustrators with unusual influences. Internet forums make it very easy to keep up with what everyone in the industry is doing, but things can get very homogenized when we take too much from one another. I think that kind of inbreeding is bad for creativity.

Outside of your work, what helps to inspire you?

I spend a lot of time on the art forums (yes, I'm a hypocrite!) There are many old masters whose work I love. Interesting people and places also make me want to paint. Same with good stories. Otherwise I try to keep life simple and steady because that's when I'm most inspired.

Packages such as Painter make great efforts to bridge the gap between traditional and digital media. Do you think this is an important link to maintain as this relatively new medium develops?

I'm not sure. It seems like there is a long history of illustrators making one medium look like another. Franklin Booth became famous by making pen and ink drawings look like engravings. The look of natural brushwork has more appeal to me than a stroke from a round Photoshop brush. For now I'm emulating traditional media with Photoshop, though I admire illustrators who are making great digital work that is more 'honest' to the medium.

Copyright Arenanet



And finally, do you think there is much demand for hand painted concept work in your job, or can artists work exclusively in Photoshop / Painter these days?

I think it comes down to whatever gets the job done fastest (and done well). Normally that means Photoshop or Painter, if only because you can't mix colours as quickly as you can choose them from a colour picker. A lot of people will still sketch in pencil and paint over it digitally. Drawing is still easier to do on paper, I think. My entire process is digital, because I jump straight in to colour and resolve the drawing as I go along.





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JAIME JONES

For more work by this artist please visit:

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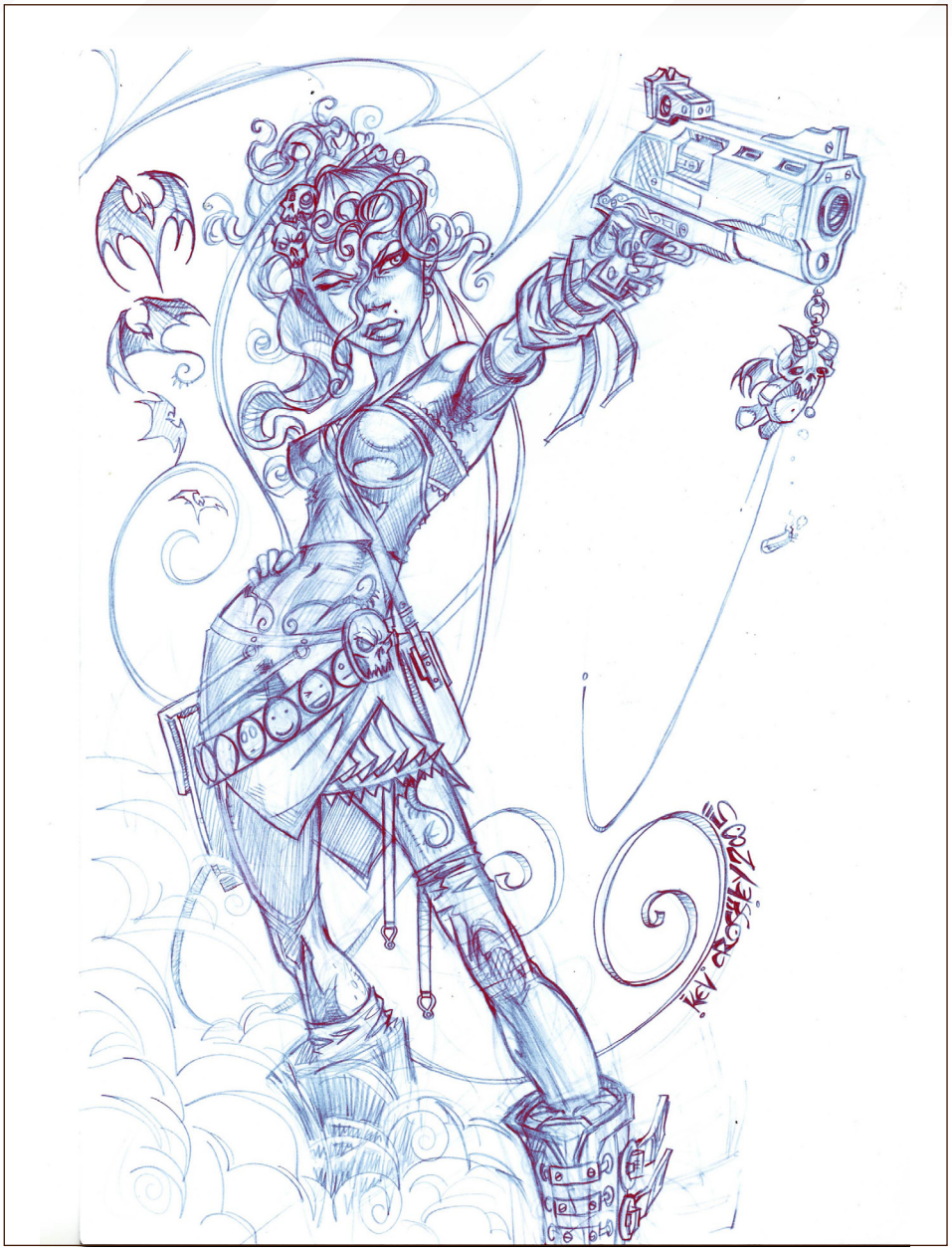
Or contact them at:

jaime@artpad.org

Interviewed by: Richard Tilbury


"IN FANTASY, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE. AS CHILDREN, THE FUTURE IS THIS BIG, BRIGHT ABSTRACT IDEA, FILLED WITH ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES. IT ISN'T CONSTRAINED BY THE 'PRACTICALITY' OR 'COMMON SENSE' THAT PREVAILS AS WE GET OLDER."
kev crossley
Working as a texture artist for almost 10 years, British artist Kev Crossley dropped his tools, shifted back to his trusty pencil and re-connected with what he loved about art. A few years later he now works as a concept artist by day and as a freelance artist producing work for the likes of 2000AD by night.

kev crossley



Hi Kev, well I must start by saying it was a pleasure meeting you face to face at the Birmingham Comic Show. Could you introduce yourself to our readers and give a little insight into your progression from where you started to where you are today?

Well, they call me Kev Crossley. I've loved drawing and creating strange creatures and fantastic landscapes since I was very small. Throughout my time at school, drawing was my one constant. Still life, landscapes, comic characters and of course monsters, but I also had a love of plant forms and trees.

As a teenager the subject matter began to lean heavily towards dragons, zombies, futuristic vehicles and space-ships, and I must have produced tens of thousands of drawings during those fleeting years. Then I went to college, and later University, where I was savagely discouraged from 'Fantasy' art. "You'll never make a living doing that," they insisted. "It isn't really art." They meant well, but it took my years to realise that they were completely wrong.



Thus, I focused on graphic design and typography instead. I performed adequately I guess, and ended up getting a job as a video games texture/ 3D artist. After 10 years doing this, job insecurity inspired me to get my pencils back out and re-connect with what I loved about art in the first place. I produced an enormous body of work purely for my own satisfaction, including over 40 watercolour paintings of fungi, plants and animals, nearly 200 cartoon strips and countless hundreds of monster/ fantasy drawings. In 2003 I was offered my first freelance work, and since then I've had writing and art in over 40 publications. Frankly, I'm still not quite sure how it happened. All of this freelance work is produced in my evenings and weekends, as I maintain my full-time position as a concept artist for my video games studio. Insane!

Yeah, that does sound like and insane amount of work. Do you think there's a point when you'll give up your day job and focus fully on freelancing? Or is the lure of creating concepts for games too much to give it away?

Well, that's THE question isn't it! 2007 turned out to be my busiest year so far; the sheer volume of freelance work meant I had to take some time away from my full-time job to deal with it (the first time I've ever had to do that!) I



guess it was my first taste of working full-time on freelance projects and I definitely learned a lot from the experience.

However, I really love my day job. The artists and programmers are a great bunch of people to share a studio (and pub) with. Plus, I've had the chance to work on some great projects, producing environments, character concepts, paintings, vehicles, story boards … It will be a tough decision to choose to pack it in, but sometimes your career kind of defines itself and you have no choice but to follow it. So, I'll do what I've always done - put everything into where I am right now, and get the most out of it, but always keep an eye out for what might appear around the corner...

Being a highly skilled fantasy artist, what is it about this genre that captivates you?

In Fantasy, everything is possible. As children, the future is this big, bright abstract idea, filled with endless possibilities. It isn't constrained by the 'practicality' or 'common sense' that prevails as we get older. This is why I believe Fantasy becomes more important the older you become. I've just spent weeks sorting out tax returns, pension details, financial stuff and other mundane but incredibly important stuff





... mind-numbingly, soul destroying tasks that nevertheless have to be done. And afterwards, to be able to lose yourself in a wild painting or book or film is a great way of unwinding. You really appreciate these flights of fancy, these 'pencil and paint day-dreams', after the drudgery of adult life. Fantasy is a mirror in which children can see the future, and adults can re-live their childhood. It is as close as you can get to real magic, and if you choose not to let an aspect of it grow with you into adulthood, a palpable sadness will creep in instead.

Could you tell us a bit about the work you did for Mam Tor's Event Horizon and can you give a little insight into what it's all about?

Mam Tor is possibly the most important and amazing thing I've ever been a part of. Liam Sharp set it all up as a vehicle for us newbies and unknowns to get our work in front of an audience. We were next to industry luminaries like Glen Fabry, Chris Weston and Greg Staples, not to mention Liam himself, and it's really had a lasting effect on the work I do today. It also gave me the chance to meet a REALLY cool and eclectically-talented bunch of people.


KEVIN ROSSEY 2006

Liam's brief was simple and wide open. We could do whatever we wanted and there was little editorial control - so I went nuts. I asked my old school buddy, Dr Karl Spracklen, to take a break from his academic writing to create a short story 'filled with monsters' and he didn't let me down! 'Vengeance' appeared in Event Horizon No. 1, and was my first 'serious' sequential art strip. Liam also let me do one of my cartoon strips for the back of the book, as well as encouraging me to develop one of my characters into the Mam Tor mascot ... PLUS he let me preview my own story in the second edition, so I was really blessed to be honest. Since Event Horizon, I've been busy with a whole string of jobs and projects, but we have hopes and plans for future projects.

So how did you first get involved with Mam Tor?

It started via a chance meeting on the Internet back in 2002 - or thereabouts. I'd started to post up my art on a few websites at that point, and one of my Alien paintings caught the eye of a comic art collector called John Bamber who then contacted me and suggested I hook up with an online community of artists. When I did, I found myself in the (virtual) company of a very intriguing bunch of artists and writers. The message board was Sharpenings, which is Liam Sharp's forum ... I remembered my weekly 2000AD's carrying HIS covers when I was a





kid!! Anyway, in May 2004 we all met up at the Bristol Comic Expo. Each of us had our folios of artwork and we found ourselves sat in the pub with Liam who was bowled over by what he saw. Together with John Bamber he hatched a plan to publish our artwork in a title that ended up being called Event Horizon… and the rest, quite literally, is history!

That first Comic Expo was a bit of an epiphany for me really. I saw real comic art pages in the flesh for the first time, and saw many of the artists who'd inspired me over the years. I'll never forget following Glenn Fabry, Simon Bisley and Liam Sharp back to the Ramada after a rowdy session in the pub - the three of them propping each other up and singing loud enough to wake half of Bristol! That said, I also discovered how much hard work these guys put into what they do, and from that day on the way I approached my own art changed for good. Had it not been for Liam and John and the support from the rest of the Mam Tor crowd, I certainly wouldn't be where I am now.


work in progress

Could you tell us what you're working on at the moment?

One such project which will hopefully appear in London's Time Out magazine in the coming weeks! I can't say any more than that now, but keep an eye out. Apart from this I've recently finished a stretch on the latest KISS comic, which was great fun but hugely stressful. I'm also producing lots of cool monster paintings, both traditional and digital, for a variety of clients, as well as working on some 2000AD and DC comics pieces.

If you could sum up your style of art work into one sentence, what would it be?

Chaotic, tactless self indulgence.

Throughout an artist's career, they will always look at artwork by their favourite artist, whether it's for research or inspiration. So where do you draw inspiration from?

I really hope I can find a brief way to answer this question, but I haven't managed so far have I? [Laughs]. Inspiration comes from everything all the time! It's kind of cool but annoying, because sometimes you just want to switch off and relax, but you'll see something that sparks your imagination - a water droplet on the window, a cat sitting in a funky position, someone with fabulous hair or clothes - and you just HAVE to start sketching or writing. It's worst for me whenever I go out into the countryside. A walk through the woods that should take an hour, say, will probably take me at least double that, as I scurry around the trees and bushes like a dryad, camera clicking away. (Thank God for digital cameras!)

When it comes to artists who've inspired me, I must start the list with 2000AD. Brian Bolland was perhaps my favourite artist of all, and the quality of his work still leaps off the shelves today. Other artists who inspired me early on include Kev O Neill, Brett Ewins, Bryan Talbot, Dave Gibbons, Belardinelli, Cam Kennedy and many others. Then in the mid-80's there came a clutch of artists who changed the landscape.



I will always remember the anticipation of Saturday mornings while waiting for the new 2000AD to come through the letterbox so I could see the new Glenn Fabry Slaine pages. His inked art blew me away - I mean it literally put my jaw through the floor. I would look at his art for hours, just uttering "wow" over and over again. When you see something like that for the first time, when you're really fundamentally moved by a piece of art to such a degree that it has a physical effect on you, you're changed for life. That might sound extreme, but those Saturday mornings in 1985 really did define the direction I was to head in thereafter. Simon Bisley followed Fabry soon after of course, and his ground-breaking ABC Warriors art just spurred me on even more. I couldn't even tell you the plot of that particular story I'm afraid ... I only ever read it for his insanity-inducing art. He understood anatomy so well; he broke it utterly convincingly in each and every gleeful panel, and those pages shone because of it.

I should briefly mention some other artists whose art I love: Liam Sharp, Mick McMahon (GOD!), Arthur Rackham, Alphonse Mucha,


KEV CROSSLEY '08

Frank Frazetta, who I only discovered in 2004! Then there are the modern painters such as Kev Walker and Greg Staples - I've studied their 'Magic The Gathering' art as if I were studying for a degree. Their stuff is crammed full of so much atmosphere and knowledge. Oh, and check out the Art Deco movement, and Cubism, and what about Manga? And I haven't even started on history yet!

As you can see, I could write a thesis on this question alone. Bits of all of these influences flavour whatever it is I might do. Sometimes it works, sometimes the cacophony of differing influences can boggle the outcome, but I think it's worth producing 100 duff pieces of art just to get that single one that really stands out.

It is aspiring to do justice to those that have come before me that keeps me persevering.







Well it's been a pleasure talking with you. One last question before we wrap things up: is there a point in your art career that you have any regrets over and if so, what would you have done differently?

Nah, regrets are a waste of time. They lead to special brew abuse and a lonely death in a cardboard box saturated in your own bitter, 'I-coulda-been-a-contender, I coulda-been-somebody' filth. [Laughs]. Seriously though, although I've come into this business fairly late on, I'm pretty lucky to have gotten anywhere at all, so if anything I'm just thankful for the chances I've had to abuse peoples' eyes with my pictures!

Actually, I do have one regret. Last year I was so busy working that I never had the time to play the Zelda Twilight Princess Wii game. It looks freaking awesome too ...

KEVIN CROSSLEY

For more work by this artist please visit:

http://www.kevcrossley.com

Or contact them at:

bombjak69@hotmail.com

Interviewed by: Chris Perrins



"THE CHANCE TO CREATE UNIQUE, COMPELLING CHARACTERS AND HAVE A CHANCE TO LET THESE CREATIONS 'LIVE', SO TO SPEAK, IS SOMETHING THAT'S DRIVEN ME FROM AN EARLY AGE."

NICK PERCIVAL



Nick Percival is a veteran 2000AD artist who has also worked in the film and game industry as well as having been a Creative Director at an animation studio. He now works as a freelancer as well as developing his personal work including a comic book mini-series, a couple of animated projects and a Fantasy/Action script along with artwork.

NICK PERCIVAL



We have interviewed a number of 2000AD artists since the magazine launched and it is a name which is synonymous with what is perhaps the most successful British comic. How does one go about getting work published in the magazine and what are the general requirements for getting a commission?

I think there are a number of important requirements to get work for 2000AD, Marvel or any established comic book company for that matter. Certainly your work needs to be of a high standard; original and good storytelling ability is a must, but it's not just about pretty pictures. You need to think like a director, interpreting the script, pacing, camera angles, body language, scene geography, etc - all are essential requirements for good comic book art. Another area that people often fail to consider is being able to deliver strong artwork to tough deadlines. I'm sure pretty much any decent artist could deliver a masterpiece if they spent several weeks or whatever on one painting, but comic book editors will want the same high quality turned around quickly and on a regular basis. It's the laws of the real world; sure, it's cool to spend forever on a piece of work, but at the end of the day, that's not gonna get you regular comic book commissions. Because all my comic book art, as with my concept and production artwork is fully painted, it's a lot of work but damn fun.



As for getting stuff published, pointing folks to your website is always a good, quick way of selling yourself and it's still worth attending comic book conventions, where editors tend to be present and will conduct portfolio reviews. I think you have to work hard at getting your stuff out there. Most editors are that busy dealing with their regular band of creators and trying to get the books out on time, that they're not gonna have a lot of spare time to actively seek out new talent. That's not to say they won't respond to someone with great talent, but you've got to be bullish and get yourself out there.



In the Comic category on your website you have a number of what look like story layouts and also covers. Do these usually come as separate commissions and is it common to specialise in one or the other at all?

Covers and interiors usually come as separate projects. Covers are cool because you can just concentrate on one striking image to sell the comic and there are some people who will specialize in only doing cover art. It's a good opportunity to show off with some powerful art and I like to do both for the variety.



Painting the interior artwork does takes a bit longer, since all my individual panels are like mini-paintings but it's also a good challenge because this is where you really get to experiment with the storytelling aspect of art. It's kind of like making a movie with an unlimited budget since you can pretty much paint anything (as long as it's in the script!). It requires more thought than painting a cover image, I think. I consider the interiors as the 'real' graft work and the covers as a welcome break to do in between jobs. They both have their up sides, I guess.



For any of our readers who are not familiar with collectible cards, tell us something about Magic etc. and what these jobs mean to you as an artist?
'Magic' is similar to traditional fantasy role-playing games, although you use cards to depict the characters (wizards, creatures, etc) and battle other players with your characters in various different fantasy lands - that's a very basic and simplified description and embarrassingly, I've never actually played the game, even though I've created artwork for the cards!



The Magic cards and card commissions I've done for other companies have been particularly interesting because you're basically given a sentence or two that gives a feel for the subject matter you're going to paint, but isn't really that specific. There's a lot open for interpretation, so it's cool to able to think outside the box and have that artistic freedom to come up with some unique ways of representing something. You are given a certain amount of visual reference for various costumes and the world settings, but you get a good opportunity to let loose with some cool stuff. It's quite refreshing to work that way.

What projects have you worked on in the games industry and briefly describe some of the job roles you have enjoyed and what the work has involved?
I used to be Creative Director of a fairly large CG animation studio in the UK, where we specialized in creating animated CG cut scenes for video games, FX and post-production work as well as developing our own original properties. We would also provide a lot of CG cover artwork for the major PC and console magazines for games such as: Spider-Man, Turok, Command & Conquer, Tony Hawk's Skateboarding, Z: Steel Soldiers, Men In Black, Soldier of Fortune, some of the Star Trek games and many others.



We also created computer animated versions of famous comic book characters like Judge Dredd, Mean Machine and Marshall Law which was pretty cool.

It was good to take the whole process from storyboarding and conceptualisation through to final edited animated sequences in the final games. I learnt a great deal and made a lot of good connections in the film industry that I still continue to work with today on my own projects.



PERCIVAL

It sounds like it was a stimulating place to work, with a versatile and varied set of projects. What was it that prompted to you go it alone?

The main reason was that after a number of years writing and directing the animation and managing people, it was dawning on me that I hadn't actually produced much artwork myself in that time. I was so busy with the day to day stuff that I had little opportunity to sit at the drawing board and actually draw or paint. I was still creative in that time but I really wanted to get back to developing and creating my own stuff again and further myself as an artist. I don't feel I regret it - it's all good experience and opened up a number of doors for me creatively, particularly in the film industry.

You have a varied biography in terms of the types of work you have undertaken. What area of industry has generally been the most interesting and if you had a choice, how would you like to see the future pan out in terms of work?

For me, it's always been about 'storytelling'. Whether that's my work in comics, videogames, animation or film. The chance to create unique, compelling characters and have a chance to let these creations 'live', so to speak, is something that's driven me from an early age. Ironically as a result of this, I've been doing a lot of writing alongside my art which has led to getting some good representation in Hollywood.





I have a dark fantasy/action script called 'Legends' that I wrote and produced a ton of artwork for and it now has a well know production/ creature designer attached to direct. It's very visual and I'm also creating a comic book mini-series based on the project in between other stuff. It's a lot of work, but it's a project that I'm extremely passionate about since it's my baby.

I also have a couple of animated projects doing the rounds and fingers crossed, I'll hopefully have the opportunity to direct one of them as well. I'm a natural cynic with the movie world though, which I think is the only attitude to have in that business, or you'll go mad. There are so many false promises and so much hype, that only if any of my projects end up on the big screen, will I truly believe any of it. It's a long process of development but at least it's never boring.

You mentioned animated projects but how has doing the CGI work compared to the comic projects and what were the most challenging aspects?

When I develop CGI work, if done well, it takes the art to a whole new level. To create a character in 2D is one thing, but if you can really

develop it into 3D and see it move, see it lit in different environments, it brings the whole thing to life. The most challenging thing is to take what's cool about a 2D character design and translate that into working 3D. You can cheat a lot in 2D or static 3D images from the angle you've chosen to depict the character, etc, stuff with anatomy, weight placement and so on. For a successful 3D character, you can't get away with that - especially if the character needs to be convincingly animated - so there is always an element of compromise when designing for 3D. If you crack it though, the end results can be stunning.



With the power of painting packages these days such as Photoshop and Painter it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between traditionally painted work and digital. How much of your work is digital and do you draw the compositions and structure the pieces on paper initially?



I used to produce all my work traditionally (acrylics, oils) back in the day and I still like to continue to produce the odd piece this way There's something physical about slinging paint around on a canvas and you can get some unique, random effects that I think, still can't be replicated digitally. More importantly, you actually have an original, tangible piece of art at the end of the day.

Having said all that, most of the work I produce now is done digitally, primarily for speed and for flexibility. It's quicker to make changes to digital artwork (proportions, colours, etc) and incorporate real world elements if required – ie. some Art Directors require photo references and such, which are quicker to incorporate digitally.

For the actual drawing side of things, I still prefer to pencil traditionally and then scan the stuff in for painting - it still feels more natural and organic for me this way.

Clowns and circus-like characters feature a lot in your portfolio. Tell us a bit about them and the concept behind their creation?

Oh, man - does anybody really like clowns? They're hideous mothers! A few years ago I was developing a horror computer animated film that was based around this evil Carnival invading a small town and some of the villains were twisted clowns, freaks, etc… I love the fact these characters are supposed to be jolly and colourful, but look like they'll tear you apart when you're not watching. I've always loved exaggerating characters and dark, moody stuff and I think this sort of subject matter lends itself perfectly to that. I love traditional horror – the classic Universal movies (Frankenstein, Wolfman, etc), Lon Chaney – all the old stuff. It's so stylised and rich in character and mood – definitely a big influence on my art.



PERCIVAL

What would you cite as the most influential sources with regard to your character designs and style, be it film, artwork, books etc?

As I mentioned before, all the classic old horror movies are just great - they're so dramatic and imaginative. They really get me fired up to paint something spooky. I like Guillermo del Toro's films a great deal as well. For me, he's the modern interpretation of the old classic horror mentality - very honest and noble in the material he creates with a unique imagination. His films are always an inspiration.

Artistically, I've always been into Frazetta (isn't everybody?), the old Berni Wrightson artwork is great stuff. I'm also constantly looking at the old masters, especially Caravaggio - the things they achieved with anatomy and light hasn't been surpassed.

I also tend to look at life a lot. I observe people, animals, body language, etc and think about how I could twist and interpret that into my creature designs and unique characters. - yes,





I'm the insane guy in the coffee shop, sat drooling in the corner, watching you go by.

Whilst sitting and drooling in cafes do you ever sketch the people you observe as a way of improving your drawing skills or indeed draw from life much in general?

Occasionally I will and I probably should do more, but mostly it's a case of observation – looking at how light affects the form, anatomy in motion, different body types, etc. I'm not sure how much filters through to my final work, but I think subconsciously you take a lot of stuff in that dictates how you approach your art and helps ultimately to define your style.


HATE
PERCIVAL

One final question; if you got into a pub brawl, which one of your character creations would you like at your side and why?

Without a doubt, it would be the demon Farmer Gutz and his pet pig monster, Betsy. With these guys in my corner, after the dust has settled, we'd be the last men standing, breaking out the cigars as the pig gets down to the serious business of eating up all the remains - scrummy!

NICK PERCIVAL

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.nickpercival.com

or contact them at:

contact@nickpercival.com

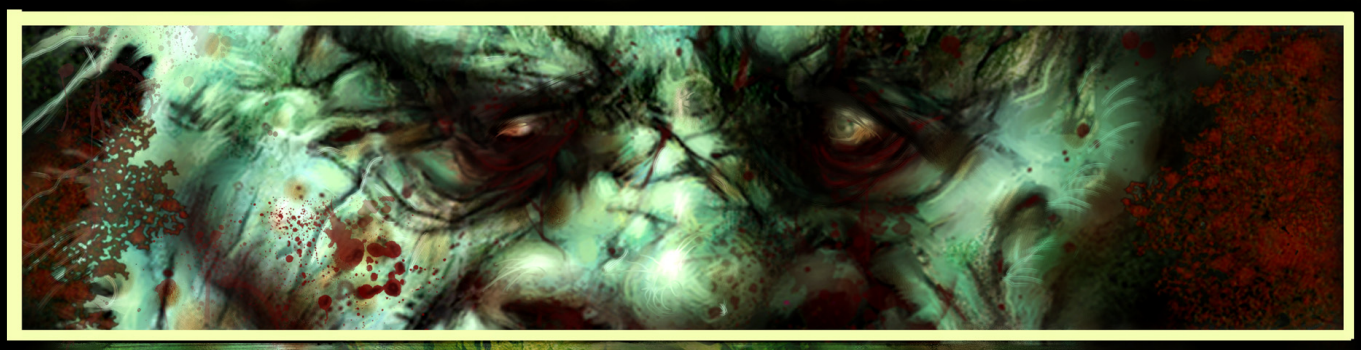
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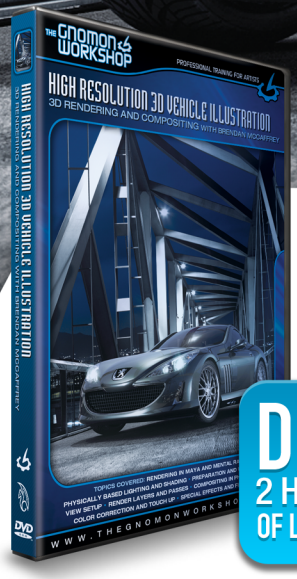




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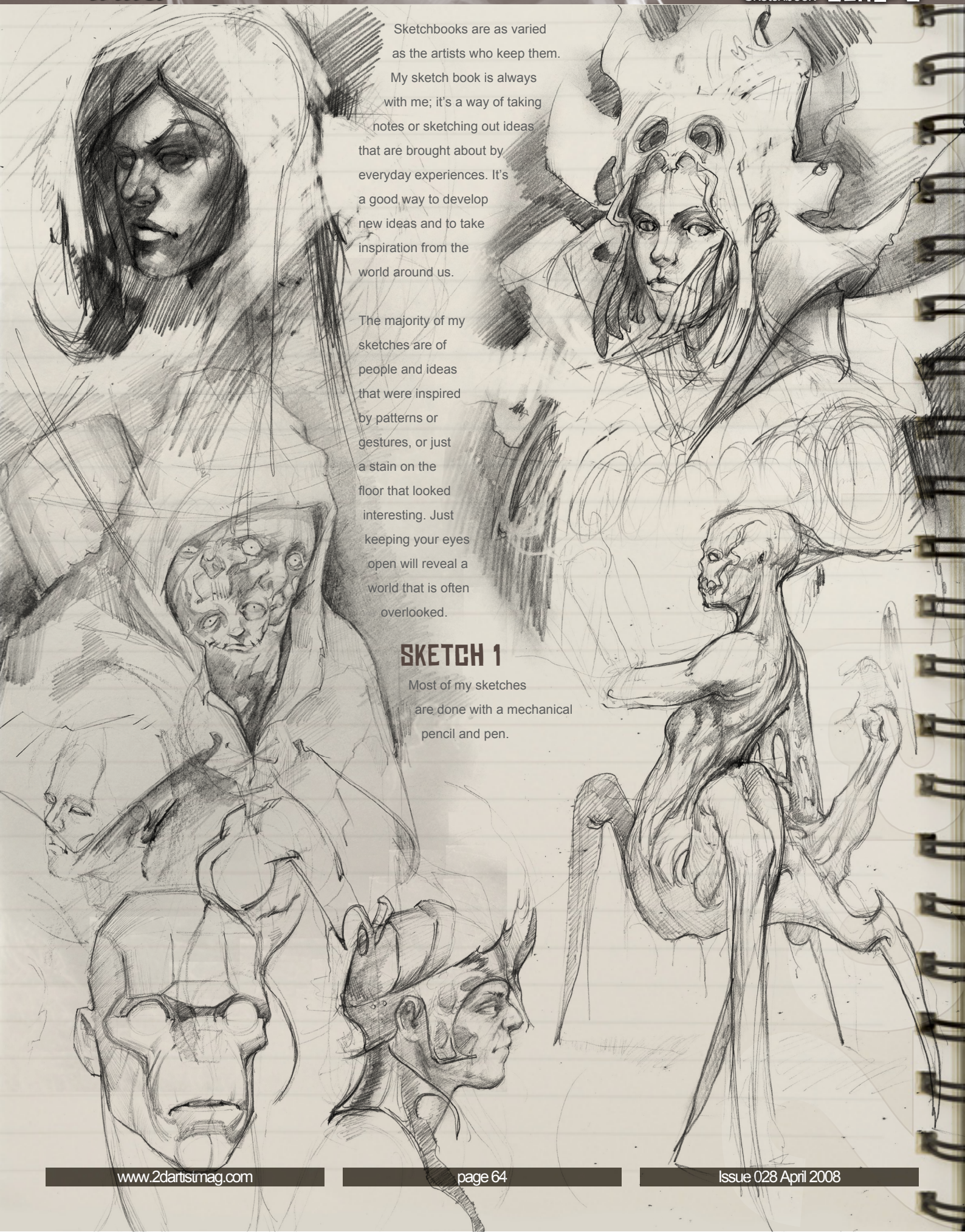
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"I WAS MORE INTERESTED IN DESIGNING THE PAGE OF A SKETCH BOOK RATHER THAN JUST HAVING RANDOM FIGURES SCATTERED AROUND."



the Sketchbook of Serg S



Sketchbooks are as varied as the artists who keep them. My sketch book is always with me; it's a way of taking notes or sketching out ideas that are brought about by everyday experiences. It's a good way to develop new ideas and to take inspiration from the world around us.

The majority of my sketches are of people and ideas that were inspired by patterns or gestures, or just a stain on the floor that looked interesting. Just keeping your eyes open will reveal a world that is often overlooked.

SKETCH 1

Most of my sketches are done with a mechanical pencil and pen.



SKETCH 2

This started out as a quick head drawing that I got bored with, so I started to scribble around to see how I could make it a little more interesting. Out of the random lines I saw some wings and pillars, and then I decided to add some kind of restraints to her to help link her to the environment.



SKETCH 3

I was more interested in designing the page of a sketch book rather than just having random figures scattered around.



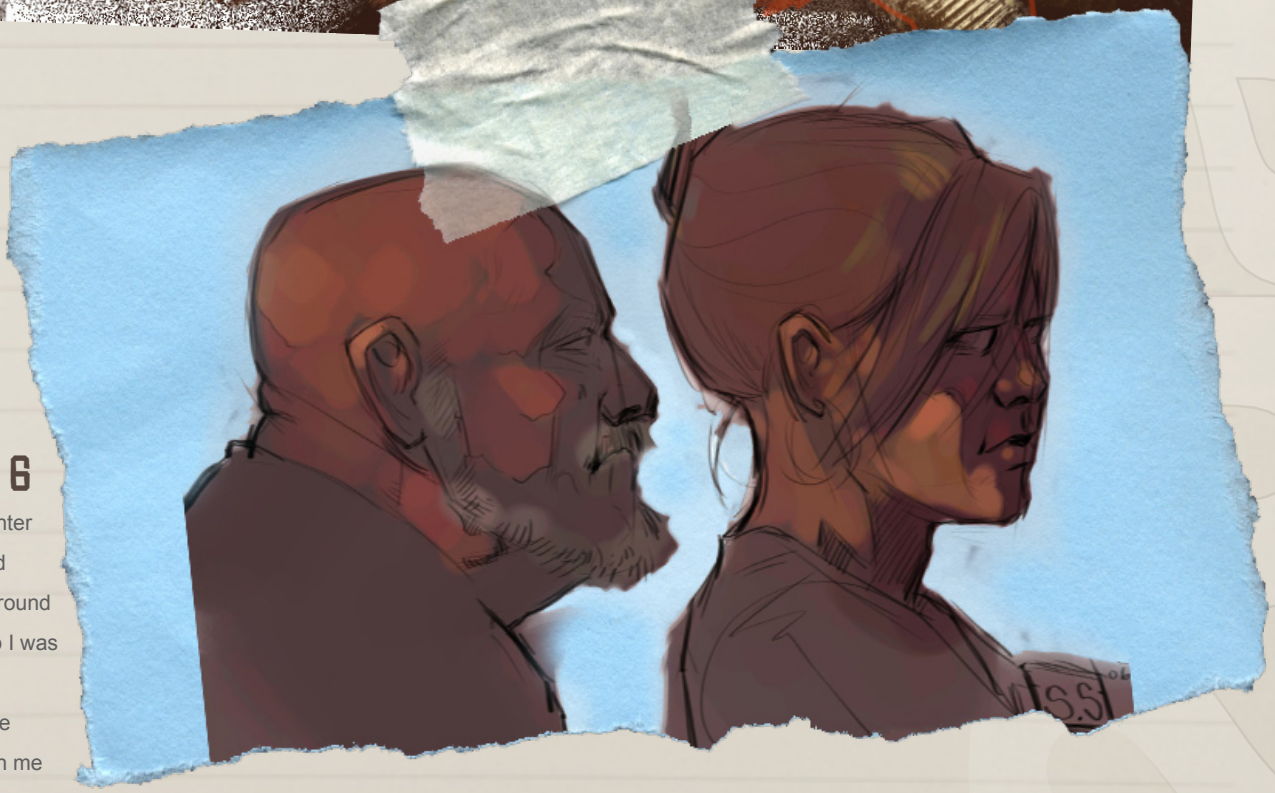
SKETCH 4

The same with this one: I tried to find a circular flow through the figures using background shapes.

SKETCH 5

This was a sketch in Photoshop using custom brushes and a limited colour palette.

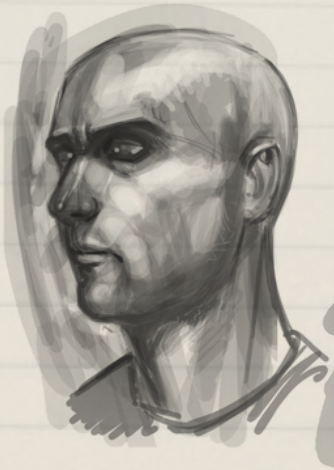




SKETCH 6

This was a Painter sketch that I did while looking around the coffee shop I was in at the time. Yep, I even take my Wacom with me once in a while!



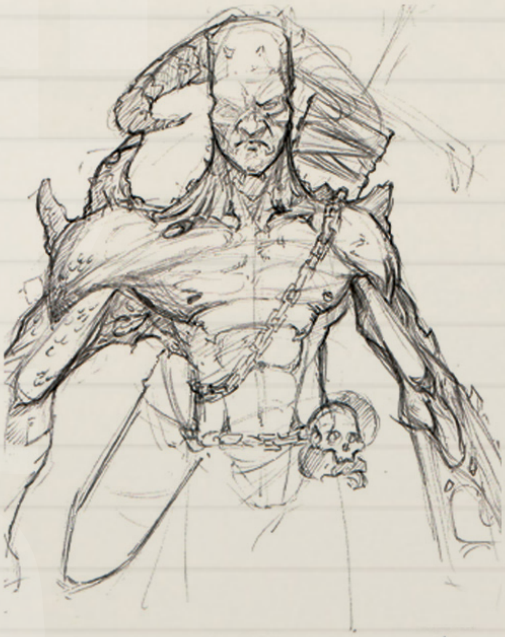


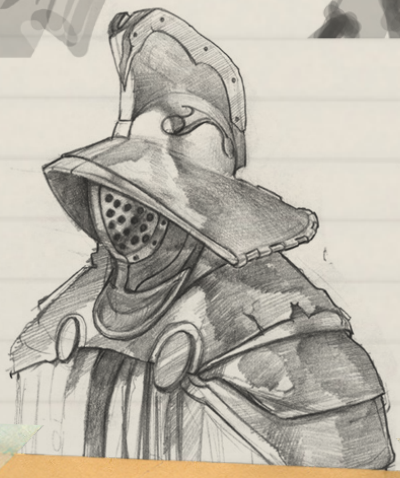
SKETCH 7

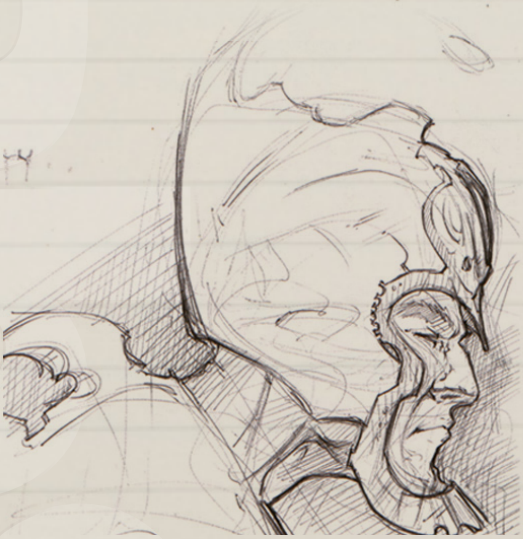
Some head studies in Photoshop using one round brush.













SKETCH 8

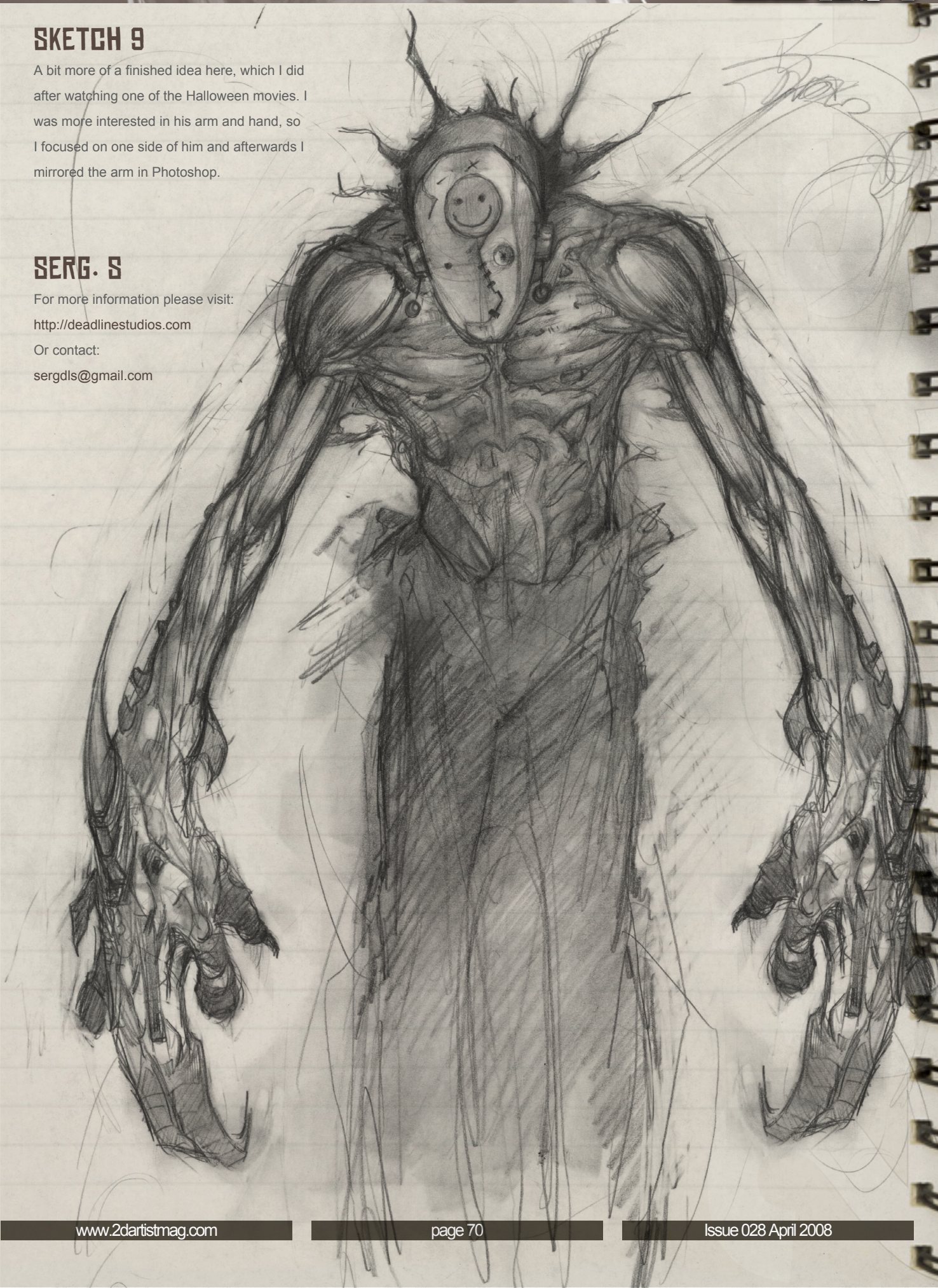
Some armour designs with pen and pencil.

SKETCH 9

A bit more of a finished idea here, which I did after watching one of the Halloween movies. I was more interested in his arm and hand, so I focused on one side of him and afterwards I mirrored the arm in Photoshop.

SERG. S

For more information please visit:
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This month we feature:
Vorace aka Nicolas Francoeur
Michelle Chuang
Yap Kun Rong
Jeff Haynie
Jakub Kujawa
asuka111
WanKok Leong
Vitaly S Alexius
Marcel Baumann
Nykolai Alexander

GALLERIES



THE ANTAGONIST

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FIRE BREATH

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ASH + SAM

Jeff Haynie

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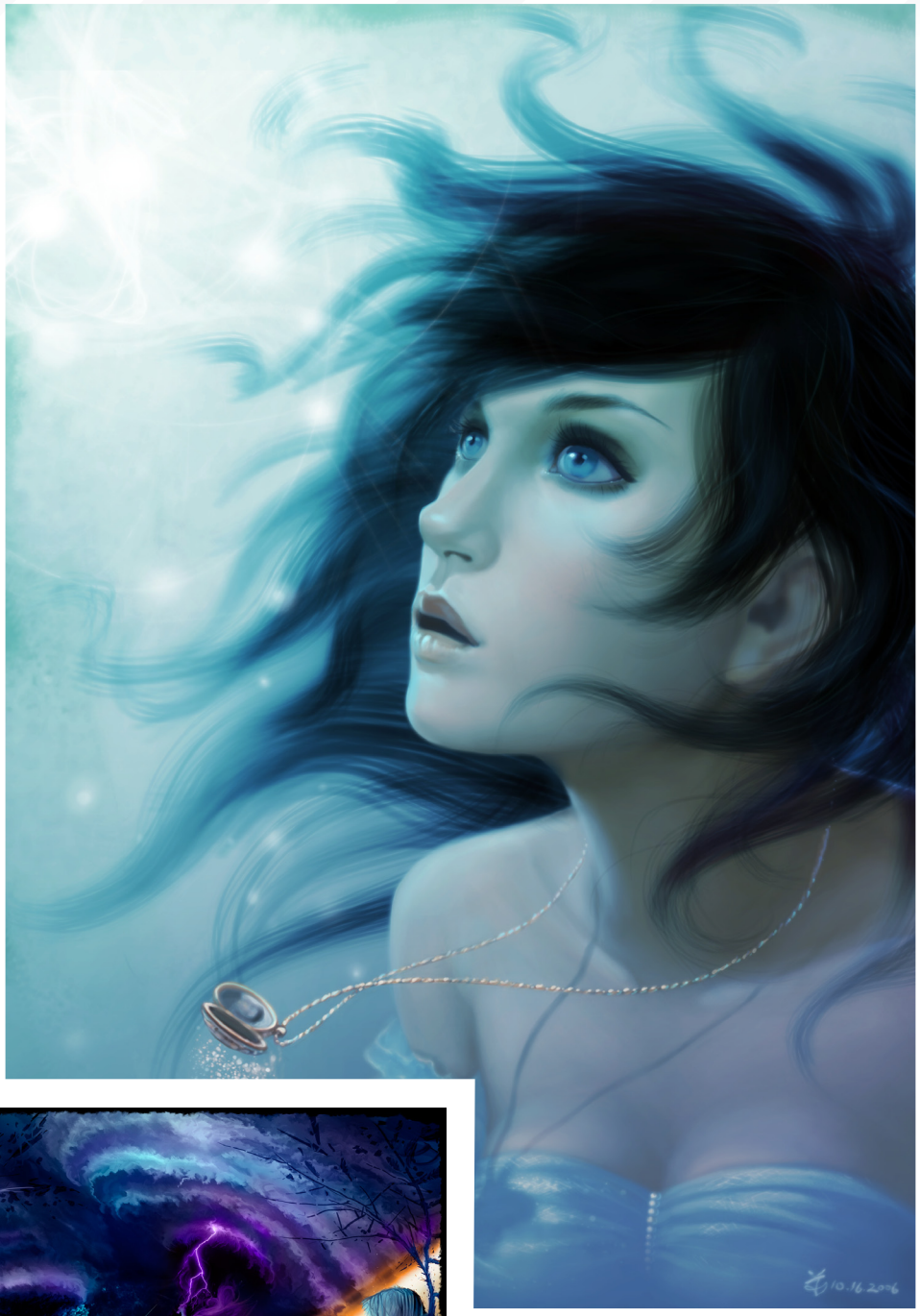
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Check out an in-depth interview with Nykolai in the May issue of 2DArtist magazine!!

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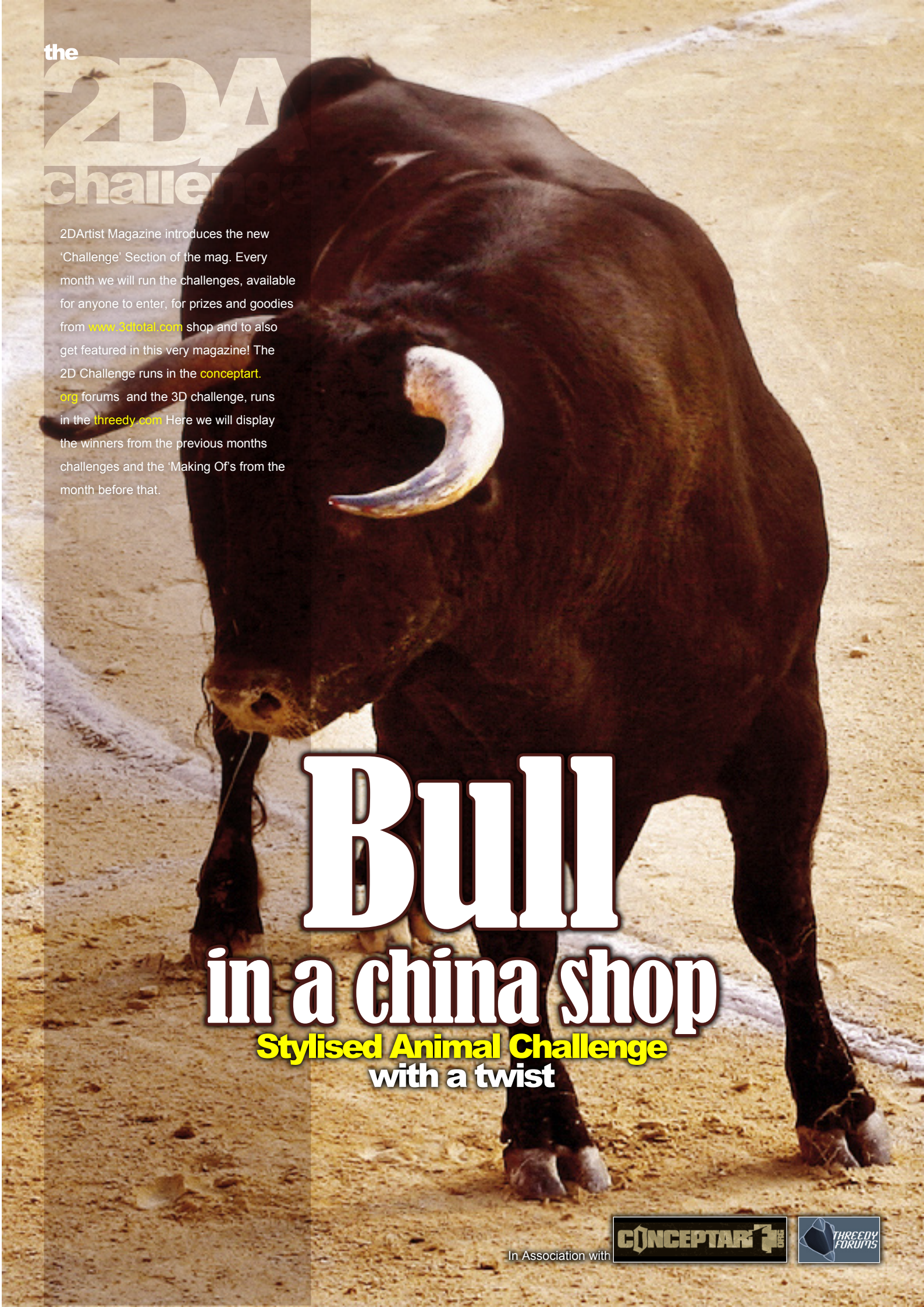
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the 2DA challenge

2DArtist Magazine introduces the new 'Challenge' Section of the mag. Every month we will run the challenges, available for anyone to enter, for prizes and goodies from www.3dtotal.com shop and to also get featured in this very magazine! The 2D Challenge runs in the conceptart.org forums and the 3D challenge, runs in the threedy.com Here we will display the winners from the previous months challenges and the 'Making Of's from the month before that.

Bull in a china shop

Stylised Animal Challenge with a twist

In Association with CONCEPTART.ORG THREEDY FORUMS

Stylised Animal Challenge

Bull in a China Shop

THE CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Stylised Animal Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select an animal and post some images in the forum thread as reference. All you have to do is create a 2D image of this creature in a stylised/ abstract/cartoon style, whilst keeping your creature instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist magazine on how to create stylised animals, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images and Making Of's that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. If it continues in success, we will try to boost the prizes as much as possible! This month's animal was 'Bull in a China Shop'. Here you can see the top eight entries, as voted for by the public...



8TH MATTEO'89



6TH MULESKINNER



7TH TUOVNI augusto.goicoechea@gmail.com



5TH BRATHER http://www.brather.deviantart.com

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Funny and humorous entries which break the animal down to its most recognisable components; emphasize these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylized / abstract / cartoon masterpiece. The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 3D render (minor post work is OK); its up to you if you want to have a background; include some graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 3DCreative Magazine, so if you can create some higher res images too - all the better! There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top 3 winners to submit 'Making Of' overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 3DCreative Magazine. These need to show the stages of your creation - different elements



4TH PAWEU
paweu@ht.pl



3RD FREAKDESIGN
http://www.freakdesign.com.au



2ND 28THWING
http://www.28thwing.com
janos.kiss@28thwing.com

and some brief explanation text - of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure, and us some quality content. Each competition will have one main thread which starts with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIP's, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...



1ST DAVENEALE
http://www.daveneale.co.uk
davejneale@hotmail.com

CHALLENGE THREAD

The entire **BULL IN A CHINA SHOP** competition can be viewed Here

The current challenge at the voting stage is:

EXECUTIONER!

The current challenge taking place is:

CAVEMAN!

To join the next challenge, or to view previous, and / or current entries, please visit:

www.conceptart.org

Or, for the 3D Challenge, please visit:

www.threedy.com

Or contact: ben@zoopublishing.com

3D CHALLENGE

Here are last month's top entries from the 3D competition:



3RD PANTS



2ND DADDYDOOM



1ST MR POPPINFRESH



MAKING OF'S

Here are the 'Making Of's from last month's top three winning entries...

3RD: BIGMIKEY

STEP 1

To begin with, I started looking for as many dragon images as I could find. I researched both Oriental and European style dragons. I referenced images of existing animals like bats, lizards and crocodiles, as well as images of dinosaurs and pterosaurs. Since dragons are purely fantasy, I looked to see how some of my favourite fantasy artists approached the animal. I studied the work of Tom Lockwood, Donato Giancola and Keith Parkinson to see how they handled some of the trickier parts of dragon anatomy, like where the shoulders and wings meet.

After some sketching, I had an image and layout that I was happy with (**Fig01**). This was a pretty rough sketch, but I was getting impatient, so I left some of the details to be figured out later. I scanned the pencil sketch into Photoshop at a size of 3078x4236 pixels.

STEP 2

Now that I had the sketch in Photoshop, I took a minute to clean it up a little bit. I adjusted the levels to get rid of some of the muddiness. I then put the sketch on its own layer set to 'Multiply' and reduced the opacity to fifty percent. This stayed my top layer for a while. I created a new layer and filled it with a medium brown to use as a base. I put this



Fig01



Fig02



Fig03

layer underneath the sketch layer. On a new layer, I started blocking in the shape of the dragon with one of Photoshop's default round brushes. I had the opacity and flow set to 'Pen Pressure' and turned off the Shape Dynamics in the brush presets so the brush size remained constant. I adjusted the size of the brush as needed.

Once I had the dragon roughly blocked in (**Fig02**), I started working on refining the head, since that is my favourite part. I pushed some of the values further and added some details to its face to give it character.

STEP 3

Had I planned on doing it from the beginning, I probably would have done this step sooner, before blocking in the colour - but I was making it up as I went along. I took a hard, round brush and started to outline and redraw the dragon on a new layer. This worked out well actually; since my form was already defined with my earlier rough work, my line-work just accented the shape that was already there. I wanted the outline to be clean but not precise – you know, with a little character.

I still hadn't decided what I wanted to do with the background at this point. My kids were also asking why the dragon's tail was cut off, so I needed to define the rock the dragon was perched on. I lightened the background


Fig04

and blocked in the basic shape of the rock. With my dragon outlined and the rock in place, I hid my sketch layer. I would occasionally bring it back up for reference, but for the most part I didn't need it anymore (**Fig03**).

STEP 4

I decided I wanted the rocks to be more of a bluish colour, instead of the brown, to help break up the monochromatic colour scheme and to compliment the orange of the dragon. To appease my seven-year-old, I outlined and detailed the rocks. Again, I just used the default round brush. Once my son was satisfied that the dragon's tail was indeed intact, but just behind the rocks, I was ready to move on *(***Fig04***)*.

STEP 5

With the rocks bluish-grey, I felt they became more prominent than the dragon against the brown background. After trying several colour combinations, I decided to keep it simple and have a clear blue sky as a backdrop (**Fig05**). This not only subdued the rocks, but also stuck with the complimentary colour scheme I'd chosen.

I proceeded to detail the dragon. I wanted it to feel crisp and clean, but still have a bit of a loose quality to it, so I tried not to overwork the details. I still used the standard brush, constantly adjusting the brush size and sampled colours, as needed, to achieve the look I wanted.


Fig05



STEP 6

After I had finished the dragon, I still wasn't happy with how plain the background looked. The problem was, I really didn't want to add a whole landscape behind it, or clouds that might compete with, and distract from, the dragon. I also didn't like how the rocks just dropped off the bottom of the page. I finally decided to add a layer of clouds to the bottom of the picture which solved both problems. The clouds broke up the heaviness of the rocks at the bottom while adding depth to the empty sky. I feel the clouds also add to the power of the dragon, implying it can go where no other animal can. Finally, satisfied with the background, I considered it finished.

MIKE BOHMAN

For more work by this artist please visit:
www.mikebohman.com
Or contact them at:
mike@mikebohman.com

2ND: ENTROID

The process for this illustration was very simple and straight forward, as is the end result, and I took the very typical approach of black inks and flat colouring. The concept behind the image began when I read the topic posted on ConceptArt.org. I thought dragons were pretty fun to draw and probably less limiting than other animals, so I took a quick look at the references posted and started doodling very loosely on paper. I made maybe three or four very basic and scribbly drawings with different stylisations and I thought this fat dragon with tiny wings and goggly eyes was nice and funny-looking enough to be developed a bit more (**Fig01**).


Fig01

So then I opened Photoshop, made a pretty large square document (no matter how bad I think something I'm making might be, I never know when am I gonna need it printed so I always work at 300 dpi) and I made an 'inked' version of the drawing I had in my sketchbook, making some small changes along the way, nothing major (**Fig02**). For this step I just used a round brush with the opacity set to 100% and the size set to Pen Pressure. The wobbly effect the lines have is just a consequence of my shaky hands; they have nothing to do with the brush or the software! I'm not very experienced with inks (digital or not, the basic process is the same) so in general, I tried to keep thinner lines where I thought there was light hitting and thicker strokes where I believed there should have been shadows, except when I had aesthetic reasons to break this "rule".



Fig02

Once I finished inking the dragon, I thought the drawing needed a paper-texture kind of background. So I took a look at my textures folder (which contains all sorts of textures and patterns, some downloaded and some self-generated) and found some really nice toned paper texture (which I believe is a manila envelope I scanned) and placed it on the background. (**Fig03**). If you have a scanner and/or a digital camera, it's always a good idea







to capture any interesting stuff you may have around or make your own with traditional media. Even when applied in a very subtle way, I think they add an extra something to digital images and helps them not to feel so ... well, digital! Now that the background wasn't white anymore, I clicked on the 'lock transparent pixels' option on the layer with the inks and changed the colours on the lines of the smoke coming out from the dragon's mouth to white (**Fig04**).

So I had the inks and the texture, but the little guy still needed some colours. I didn't want to lose the paper texture when I coloured the picture, so I set a new layer in Overlay mode and applied some flat colouring on it. When you work directly on this mode, the colours and values tend to mutate so you have to make a trial-and-error sort of process to get exactly the colours you want. The actual colours I used were a very dark cold red for the dragon's body and a dark bluish green for the grass, as you can see in the example, where I show that layer in Overlay mode on the right and how it looks when compared to the Normal mode (on the left) (**Fig05**). Almost all the colouring was made with the same round brush at 100% opacity that I'd used when inking, except in the lower part of the image where I wanted the grass to fade and mix with the background so I used a chalky brush with a lower opacity (I varied it according to my needs).

Then I created another layer, this time set to Multiply mode, and added some flat shadows to the drawing, again with the same round brush. The Multiply mode always makes things darker, so I chose very light, almost pastel, versions of the colours I had used for the flat colouring. You can see the comparison again, this time between Normal and Multiply mode (**Fig06**). I tried to respect the choice I made regarding lighting in the inking stage, so the shadows are pretty much always in the same places as the thicker lines.


Fig06


Fig07

At this point the image was pretty much done, but it still seemed unfinished and unremarkable, so I decided it needed some type and ornaments to give it a full old-time storybook look. Besides having a very useful textures folder, I also have a graphic elements folder which contains flourishes, borders, splatters, abstract shapes and stuff like that (once again, some collected from different sources and some I made myself). I dug out a shape I liked from that folder, changed its colour and proportion a bit, and repeated it to make a border around the whole picture (**Fig07**). I moved the dragon from the centre of the image to the left and up a bit to make the composition a bit more interesting and give space to the graphics. Finally, I typed the text, chose a nice-looking

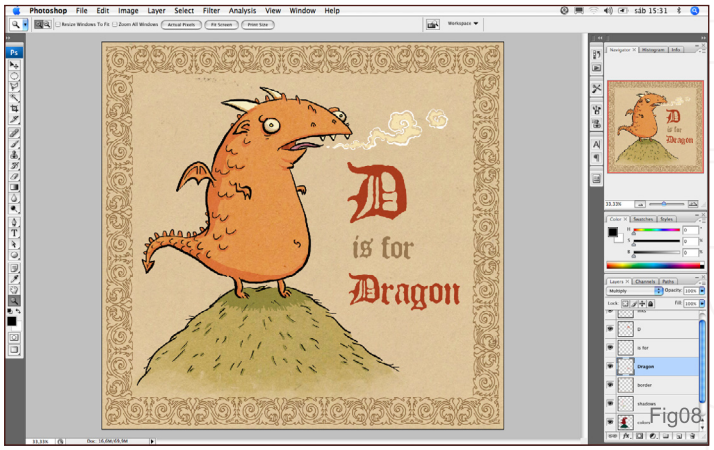


Fig08



gothic font (this one in particular is called Flyerfonts Malfunction) and played with the size, colour and arrangement of the words until I was satisfied with the overall look. The font and border layers are also set to Multiply (**Fig08**), on the final image.

And... that's all! As you can see the whole process was really basic and its technical side didn't have any secrets. If I had to give a couple of pointers that I think are important, I would say that firstly, a texture can make everything better; and secondly, disproportion is your friend when it comes to funny characters!

VICTORIA MADERNA

For more work by this artist please visit:
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Or contact them at:
vmaderna@yahoo.es

1ST: MIGSTA

STEP 1

Using Photoshop, I started by doing silhouettes or just sketching my designs. I usually sketch very light, and then when I'm happy with the design, I'll go over it with more definite lines. This time I had a clear picture in my mind of what I wanted: a very playful, puppy-like dragon.

STEP 2

I added a layer under the initial line work. I like to do this under the sketch because I can have more control over the colours, as opposed to doing it over the sketch as a multiply layer. In this layer I added flat colours to every element of my design.

STEP 3

After I'd chosen the right flat colours, I made a selection of the colour layer and then started to paint in the shadows on yet another layer. This began to give volume to the character.

STEP 4

After applying the darkest possible shades, I started thinking about how bright I wanted this character to be. A lot of this stage is done by copying the initial flat colour layer to another layer and by using a 'Color dodge' brush I began to bring out the highlights. Using Color dodge brings out a



Fig01

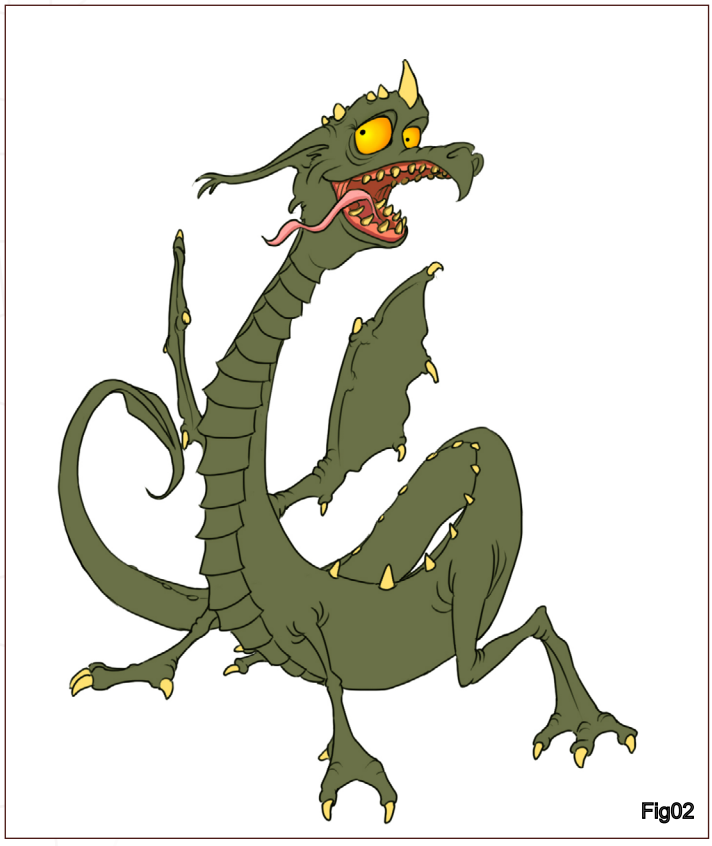


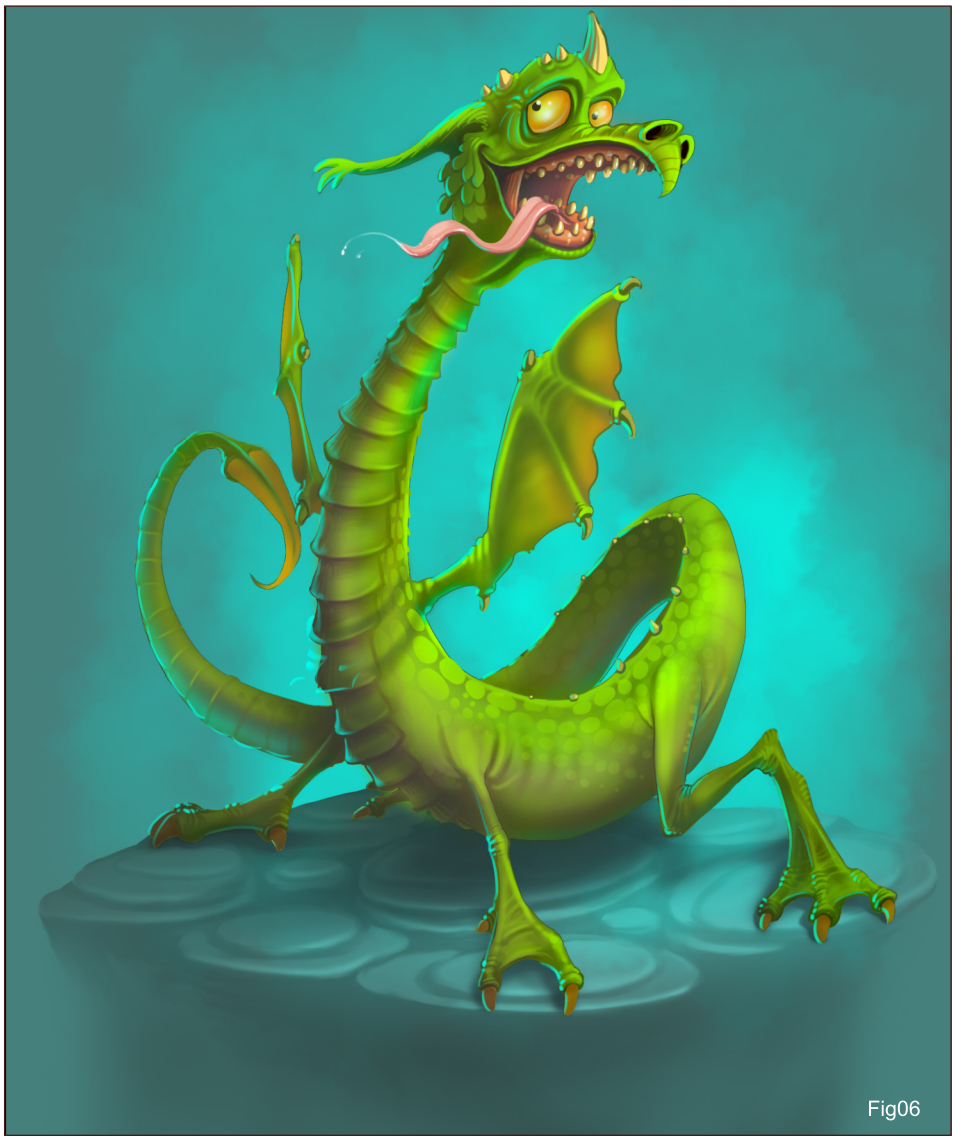
Fig02



Fig03


Fig04


Fig05


Fig06

nice saturated variation to the initial colour. Try not to use white for highlights because they tend to turn your colours milky.

STEP 5

Once the character was far enough along, I added another layer underneath my existing ones, which became my background layer. I used a custom brush to create a cloudy/smoky environment. I tried to choose a colour that would compliment the colours in the character and I made the centre brighter to accent the character's silhouette.

STEP 6

At this stage, I started adding highlights based on my background colours. I also added a base so that the character wasn't floating. So that the base wouldn't take any attention away from the character, I kept it very subtle, with soft ambient shadows. Sometimes hard shadows seem to take focus away from the character.

STEP 7

After I added a plain blue background I felt that there needed to be another background colour

introduced in order to make the character stand out even more. I used one of my favourite combinations of blue and orange to really accent the image. As part of my final pass, I fixed some details that weren't quite right and since I was going for a playful dragon, I also added a collar with a bone to give it even more of a 'puppy' feel.

MIGUEL LLERAS

Contact this artist at:

mlmikey@sbcglobal.net



Fig07

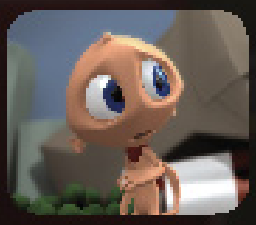
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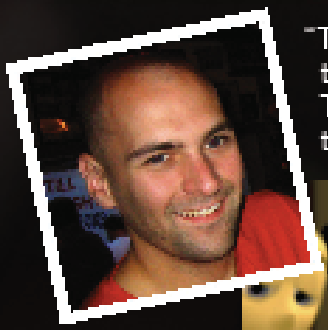
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Speed Painting

Intro Text

Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. We've asked two artists this month to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

This month our talented artists, Ignacio Bazán Lazcano and Daniel Ljunggren, tackle the topic:

MAN-EATING PLANTS!

IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop CS2

First of all, you must decide what to do with your picture. This is the most important thing to do, because it's not very often that the best idea comes out – magically – from a unique brushstroke. If it were like that, then our whole history would be different! The best thing is to make several sketches – at least four – to give yourself a variety of options and to help you get a better composition and cover different styles (**Fig.01**).

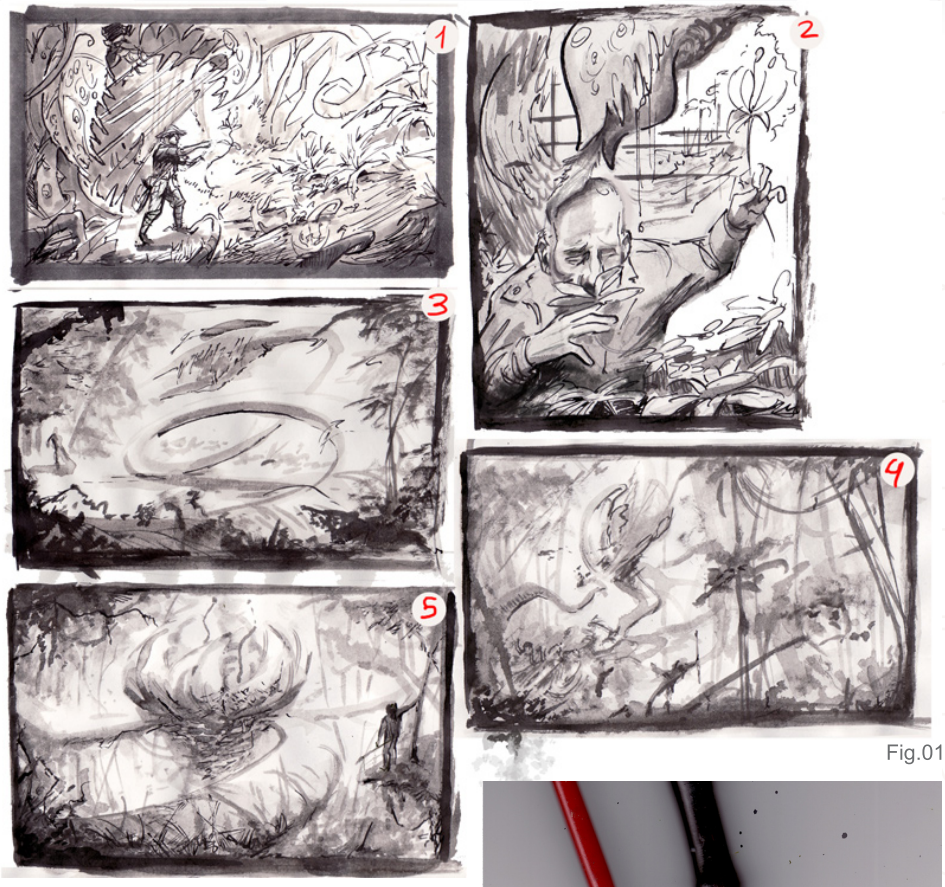


Fig.01

Here, I worked my sketches using black ink, a pen-nib and a paintbrush. My idea was to give it a more traditional stamp and to take advantage of natural textures one can obtain when using a paintbrush. Sometimes it's good to combine several techniques in order to get unique results (**Fig.02**).

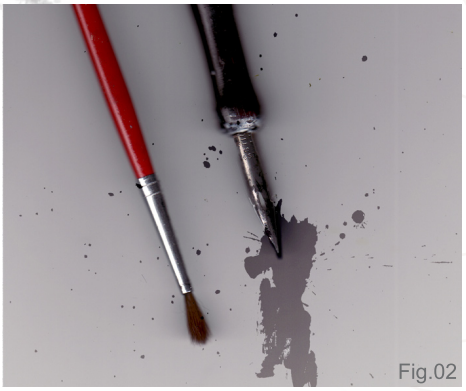

Fig.02


Fig.04

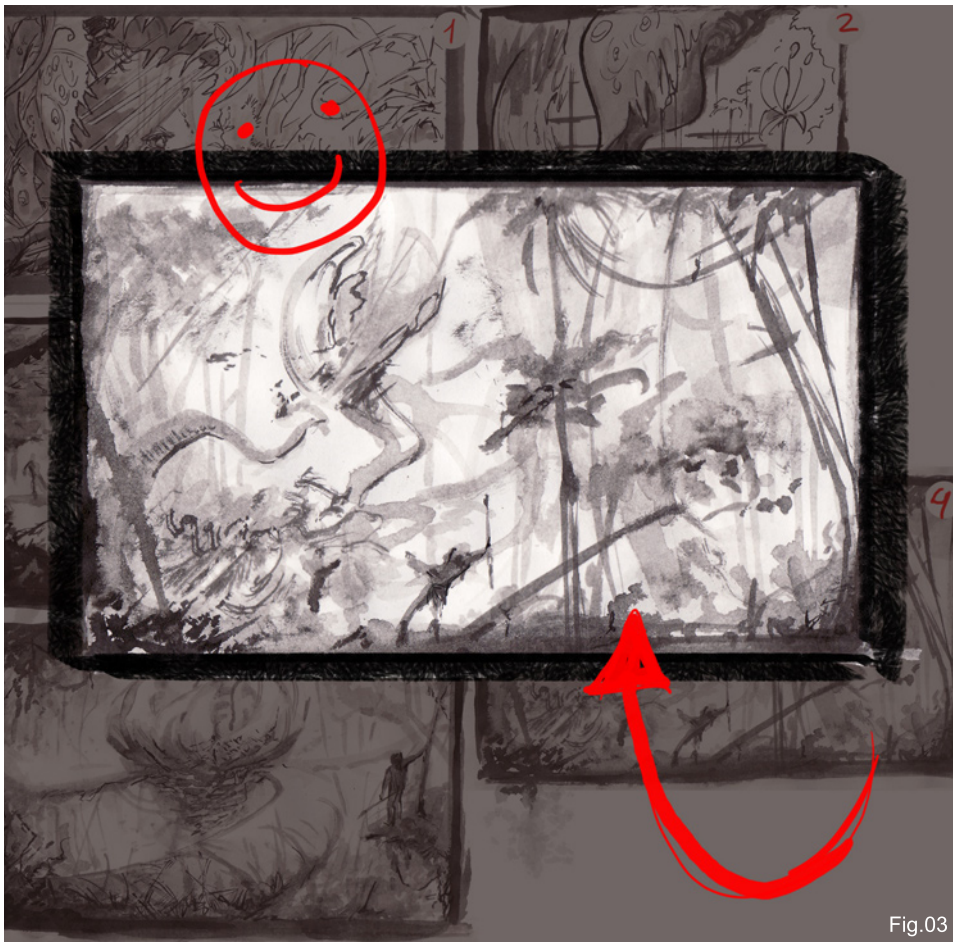


Fig.03

Once I had several options, I chose the one I liked most, which was the one I felt had more action and dynamism (**Fig.03**).

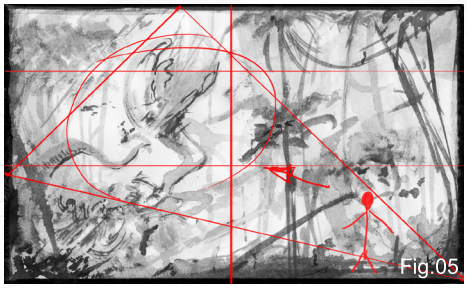
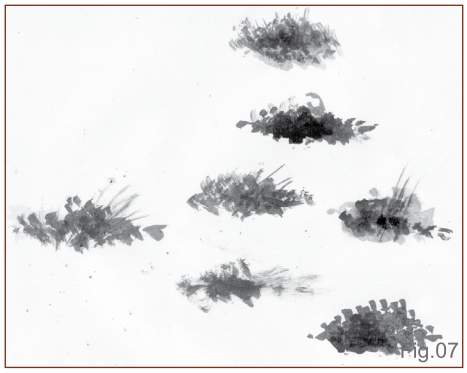

Fig.05


Fig.06

I opened a new file, at 3000 x 1800, and pasted in the sketch. First of all, I tried to analyse the composition. I realised that objects weren't arranged in the ideal way (**Fig.04**); I therefore selected the "plant hunter" with the loop, turning it from the middle of the picture to the right side of it (**Fig.05**). Finally, I added some more hunters to give the composition more drama (**Fig.06**).

To get depth in my picture, I accented the contrasts by adding vegetation and better defining what was placed in the foreground. For this purpose, I created several paintbrushes. As my idea was to go on with the traditional technique used to make my sketches, I decided to set my paintbrushes using the spots you get when pressing a paintbrush against the wall. I used black watered-down ink and a paintbrush to spot a paper sheet, testing different pictures on it. To save time, you can also use Photoshop to draw them directly (**Fig.07**).


Fig.07

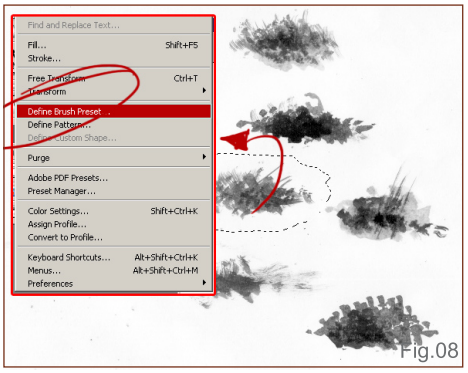


Fig.08

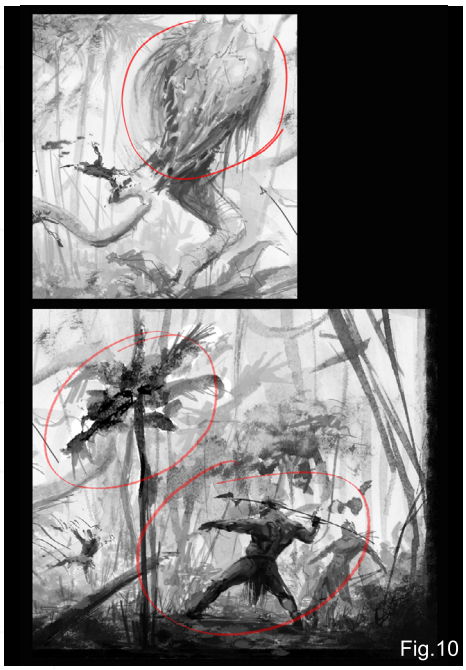

Fig.10


Fig.09

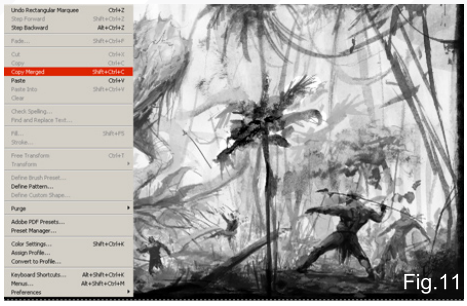
The following step was to choose the spot I liked most, turn it into a new paintbrush, and then cut it and paste it on a new document (CTRL + C + N + V) (**Fig.08**).

In **Fig.09**, you can see how the paintbrush looks in my picture. I then touched the whole picture up, especially the hunters and the flesh-eating plant (**Fig.10**).

With the subject being a plant, I already knew what the leading colours for my picture were going to be, and I knew that green and orange would match better.

I selected the whole canvas and then applied copy merged (**Fig.11**). Once I had joined the whole image together in one layer, I changed its colour to green scale (CTRL + U + COLORIZE) (**Fig.12**). I achieved a contrast by creating a new layer and painting it orange at 100%, changing the layer to the Color Dodge option. I did this on the grass and on half the hunter's body. Remember that to create distance amongst objects and make them stand it, it's best to use "warm" colours for the foreground and "cold" colours for the background (**Fig.13**).

I selected the principal lights with a loop to focus points of attention better. I used the loop, selecting strongly lit areas, and filled them with blue colour using the bucket tool (**Fig.14**). I changed the layer to the Overlay option, 100%, and then used the eraser to brush 30% of the mask's border in order to get a better fusion of colour in the background.


Fig.11

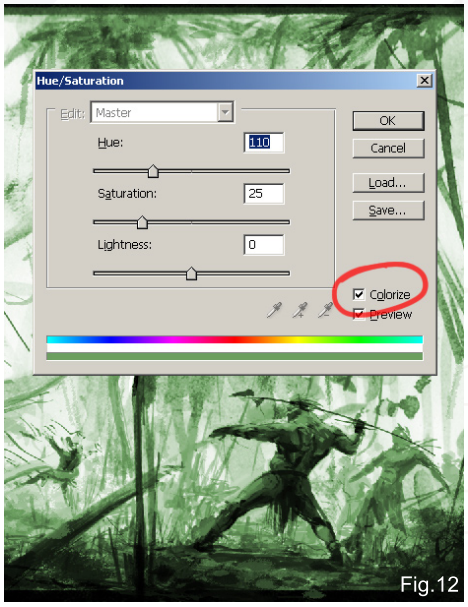


Fig.12


Fig.13


Fig.14


Fig.15

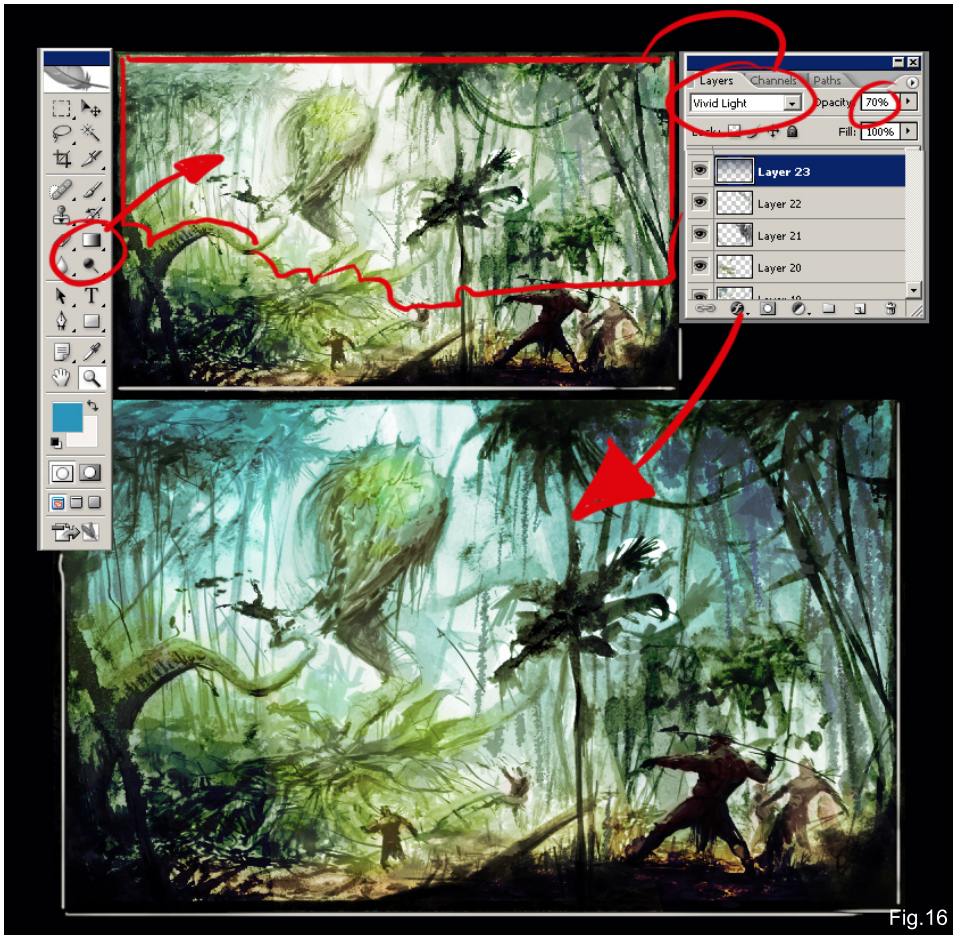


Fig.16

Continuing with the lights, I used a lot of green colour on the flesh-eating plant to make it stand out. I opened a new layer and painted the moss colour on the plant's surface green, using the Overlay option at 100%. Thus, I obtained a vivid green colour (**Fig.15**).

To add cold tones to the background, I opened a new layer, selected the bucket from my tool

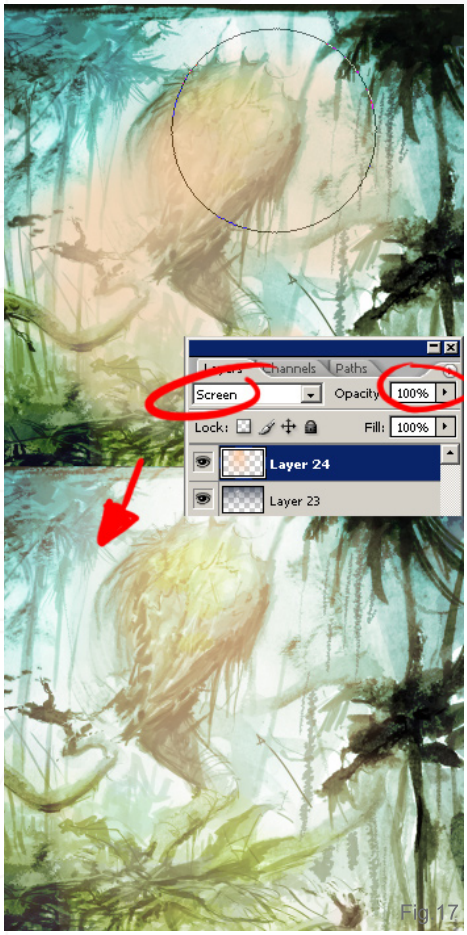


Fig.17



Fig.18



Fig.19

bar on the “gradient” option, chose a blue-green colour, and finally used the Vivid light option at 70% on the same layer (**Fig.16**). To separate the plant from the bluish background, I made a new layer and used an orange colour, opacity 30%, in the Screen option at 100% (**Fig.17**).

The next step was to add all the remaining details to the flesh-eating plant (**Fig.18**). To do this, I used one of the textured paintbrushes I created for this picture, and the basic rounded paintbrush. I gave the plant more definition, added palm trees behind, and improved the right hunter’s anatomy and position. The background had too much white colour, so I added blue to get a better contrast between the plant and the back (**Fig.19**).

To finish, I placed a pair of spears over the plant to make the scene more violent. If you wish you could also use a new layer with a textured photograph, to make it more realistic.

I hope you enjoyed reading this as much as I enjoyed the experience of making it. Remember, no matter how much time you have, you must pay great attention to your original sketch to get the best results! (**Fig.20**)

IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO

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Fig.20

DANIEL LJUNGGREN

CREATED IN:

Software Version Information

INTRODUCTION

In the previous speed painting tutorial that I wrote for 2DArtist, I used a rather methodical approach (thumbnail sketching to greyscale painting to colour painting), so I thought I should do quite the opposite this time. Starting the actual painting directly with colour is, personally, riskier because there is more to deal with at the same time. On the other hand, I think it's a lot more fun, and I can skip the actual "greyscale to colour" step, which can be painful sometimes.

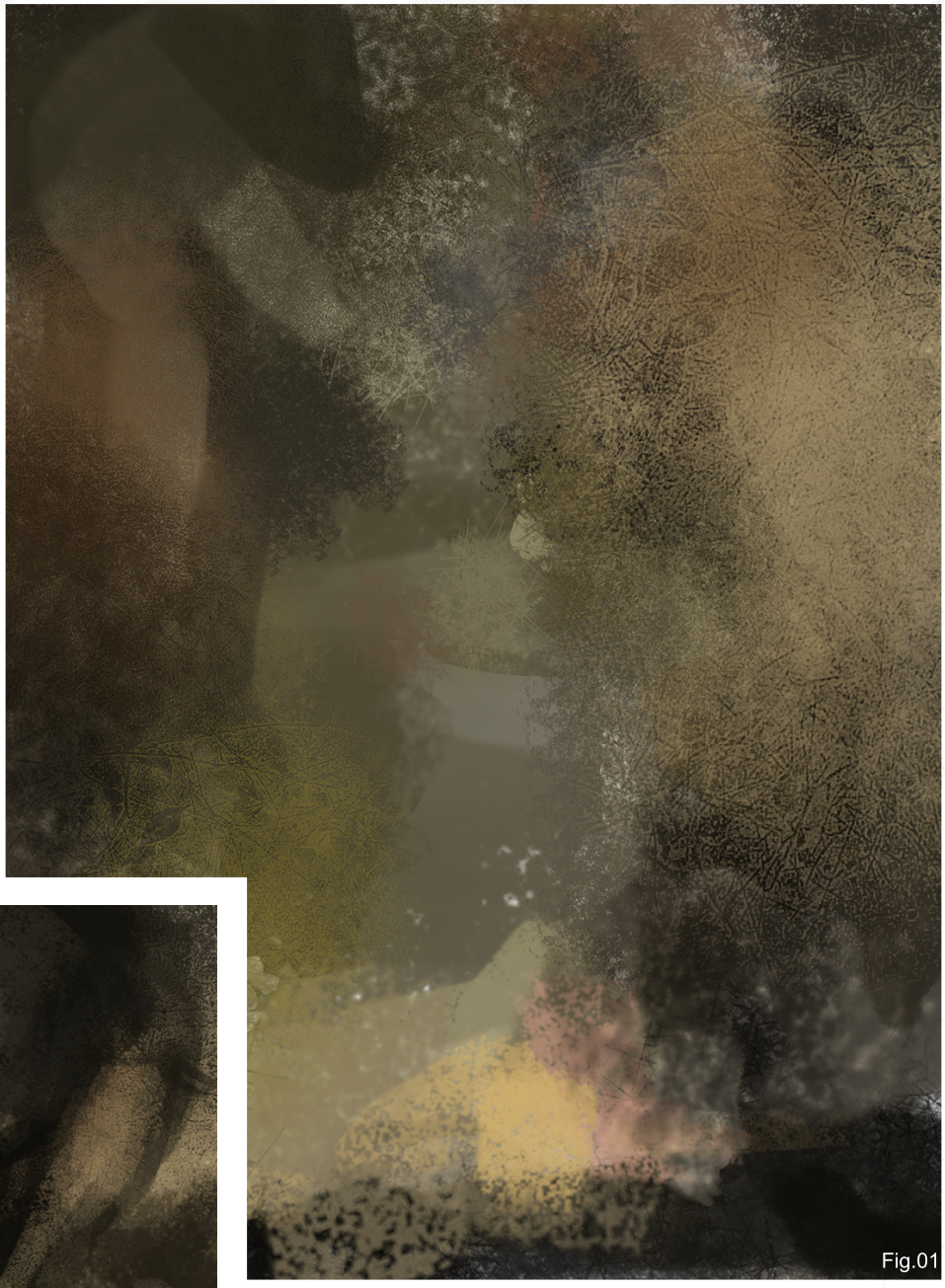


Fig.01

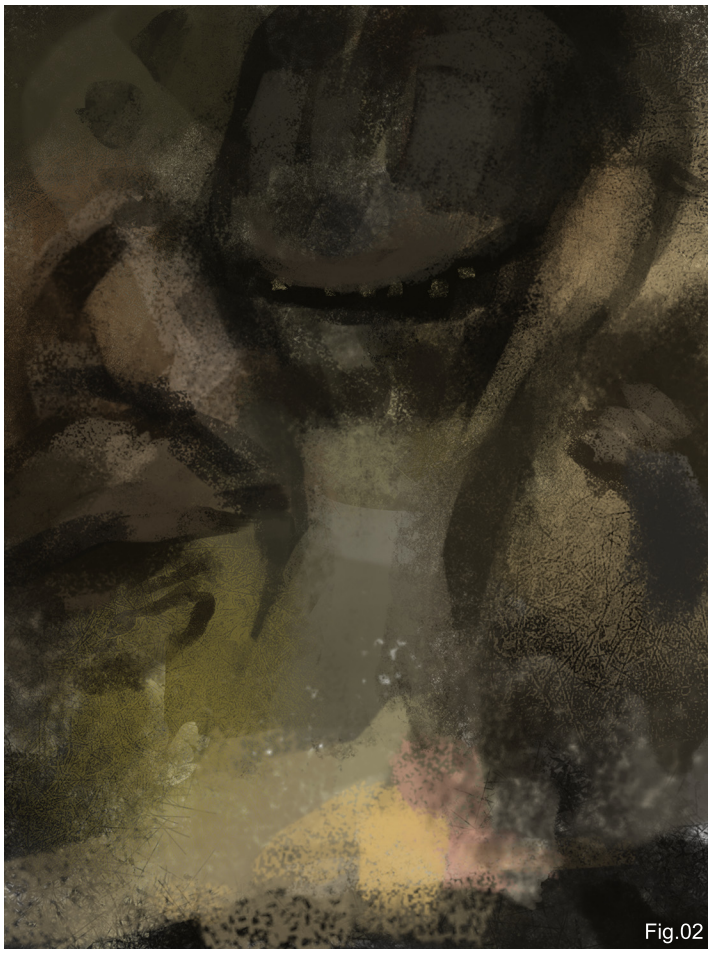


Fig.02

PAINT!

I started by just throwing down some colours and contrast onto the empty canvas. I used large texture brushes, trying different colours together and going for a somewhat warm palette (**Fig.01**).

I had a vague idea for the composition; I knew I want a human character standing pretty much in the centre of the lower half of the image, looking up at some nasty carnivorous plants. I created a new layer and painted in some big shapes which suggested the foreground plants were looking down on an imaginary character (**Fig.02**).

Because I didn't like the colours at this stage, I tried a more reddish palette using the Hue/Saturation settings. Along with that I refined the

shapes a bit more, pushing the left plant back a bit and adding a dark silhouette representing the character (on yet another layer). The feeling of water splashing against the rocks (or whatever it is the character is standing on) was all by chance, but this gave the idea of having the plants emerge out of a swamp (**Fig.03**).

At this point I was thinking that the foreground should receive a local light, but I wasn't sure about the rest of the painting.

The huge head of the main plant was taking up too much space and focus, and the way the stalk was shaped made it feel like it was bending, trying to fit inside the painting. I wasn't happy with this, so I used the Lasso tool around the plant, and scaled it down. To free up even more space I made the canvas larger at the top, and added some paint to that area (**Fig.04**).

I added some lighter hues to the ground, suggesting reflections, which made the swamp water look more realistic. On top of the background I created a new layer for some distant plants and trees. I painted some light behind the trees, and added a few design elements to the foreground plants and the character.


Fig.03

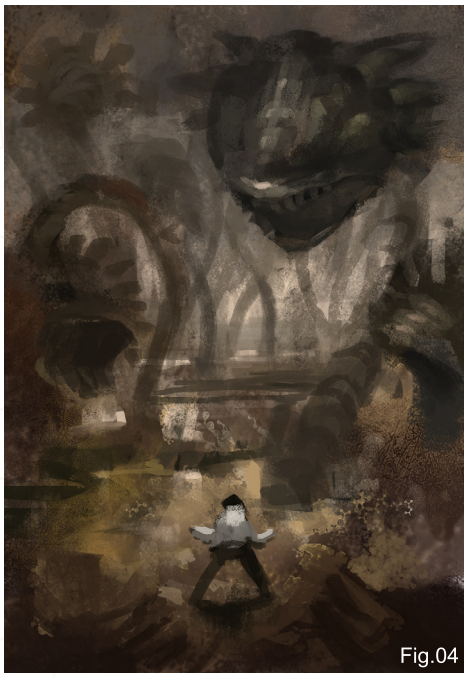

Fig.04


Fig.05

It was now time for more refining and detailing (**Fig.05**). I worked on the main plant, trying to find a decent design. The background plants were defined and some hints of vegetation on the ground were added.

Because I felt that the image needed more colour variation, I added more Cyan/Blue to the background, which made the painting a lot more interesting to the eye.

I added more design elements in an attempt to make the plants look more interesting (**Fig.06**).

I wasn't sure about the plant on the far right; as I feel the placement and the side profile made for a stiff and obviously planned composition. The plant would probably have attacked already if it was such a short distance from the character, so I removed it completely.

Now I wanted a more unified palette again, so I added a warming photo filter, which felt better (**Fig.07**).


Fig.06


Fig.07


Fig.08

I started to move things around a bit; the closest plant was shifted so that the head was in line with the golden ratio, which made for a better composition. I tried moving the character around as well, to see if it added to the composition, but because it didn't work with the alignment of the plants, I let it stay where it was.

I added more vegetation to the background to give it more of a forest feel and I refined the details of the ground and the foreground plants.

Because I felt the shape of the main plant was rather boring, I gave it a more interesting look (**Fig.08**). Not as "evil" as the one before, but more creepy!

Adding a "black & white" adjustment layer on top of all other layers enables you to quickly spot any values that don't quite work. The closest plant and the left plant further away had values that were too similiar in **Fig.08**, so I adjusted the values to pull the foreground plant closer to the viewer.

I began working on the character, giving him a more dynamic pose and readying him for the coming attack.

The left foreground plant should focus more on the character so I fixed that (**Fig.09**). I gave the closest plant a longer stalk and a more sinister look, with sharp teeth and lots of tentacles.

I used some big brushes to apply contrast in certain areas, making the painting slightly more comfortable to the eye. A few vague rays of light in the top left corner were added, then some final levels adjustments and the painting was done!

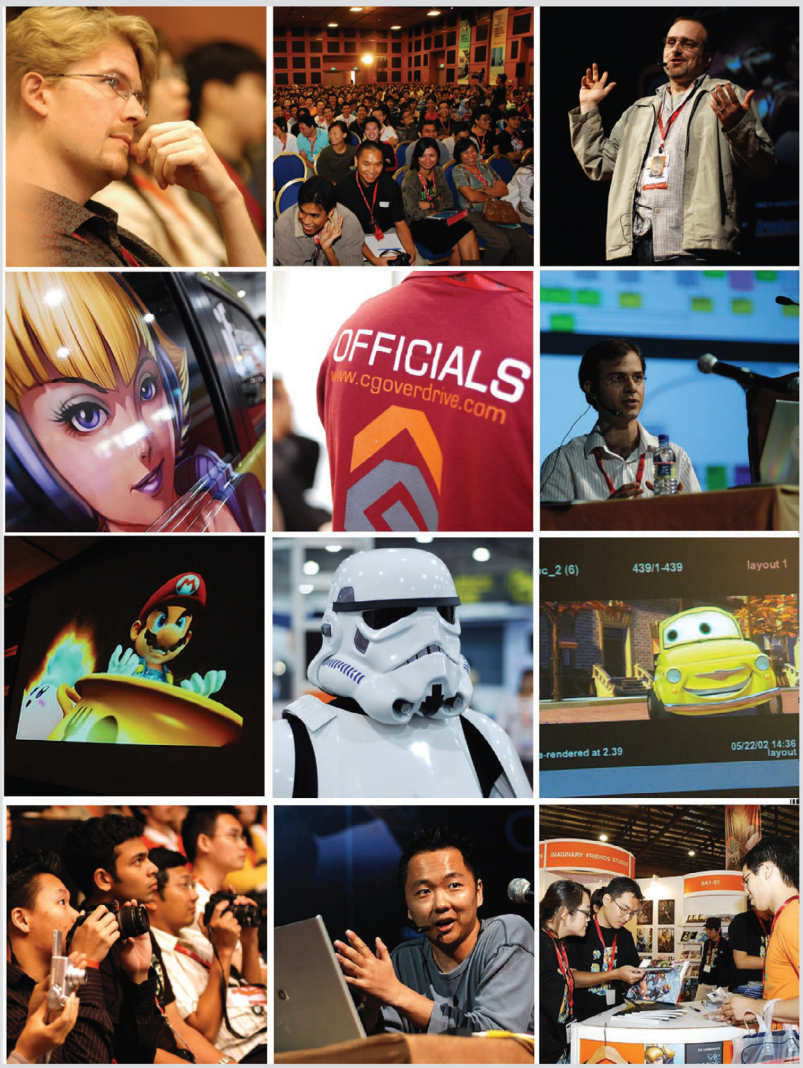
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Fig.09


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Tiberius Viris brings to us the third part of this 5-part Matte Painting Tutorial Series. He will cover basic tasks for all of us that would like to get into doing some matte painting, as well as covering some more advanced aspects...

In this part, Tiberius shows us how to convert a sunny image and turn it into a storm scene! Enjoy...

TIBERIUS VIRIS


Fig. 01

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop

INTRODUCTION

Greetings and welcome to the third part of our matte painting tutorial series! This month we will continue with the process of turning a specific summer's day scene into a stormy one. This is usually a smooth process that combines all the basic techniques you've learnt before, in Parts One and Two of this tutorial series, and in this part I will teach you how to handle unwanted shadows – something we deliberately avoided before!

Here you can see the before and after result of what we're going to do (**Fig.01**).

WHAT ARE WE AFTER?

We start off with the same raw photo, which you should now be pretty familiar with, and we want to bring a storm into our scene...

To start with, there are two kinds of ways to portray a heavy storm (well there are more actually, but let's say two for the sake of this tutorial to keep things simple):

- The 'Artistic' Way: This is a very popular type that you've probably seen lots of times before, where you have a dark and distressful mood (sometimes a little brownish!)

- The 'Realistic' Way: In matte painting, we're less concerned by artistic impression and 'how nice it looks', and more about mimicking photographic reality. Real storms usually have grey overcast skies with desaturated moods, occasionally with small tints of green and cyan (when the storm is extra heavy).

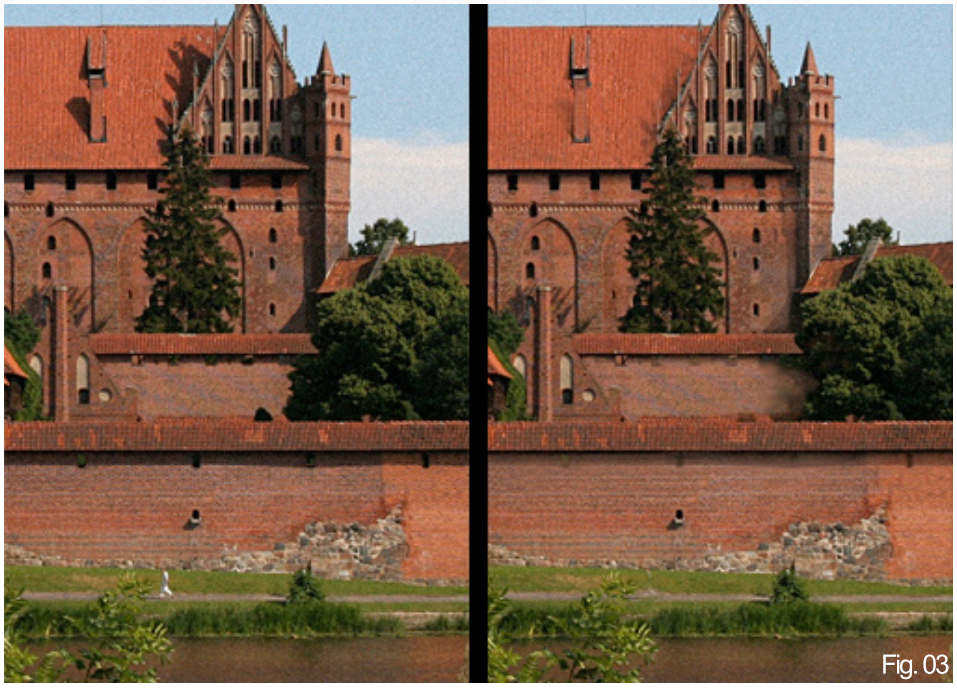
As I mentioned earlier, the process for this matte painting is fairly smooth, and it involves the following steps:

- First of all(probably the most delicate step), we need to remove any hard-edged shadows


Fig. 02

(if any) from the original image/frame. When we have an overcast scenario, there is little shadow information, and even that is diffused and scattered (at the point of which objects may start to look flat!);

- We need to achieve the right sky for the scene;
- We need to bring in our new sky (using the masking techniques you've seen in the previous parts of this tutorial series);
- We need to match the new sky with the Color/Saturation for the rest of the scene;
- We need to match up the lighting;
- We need to adjust the Color/Saturation of the scene, according to the type of storm we wish to portray;
- Finally, we need to add details, such as raindrops. **Important note**: As static details these are **illustrative elements only**! In a film, these would not be done on the matte itself, but via compositing). However, I'll add them to this image to demonstrate the process, as if this was a frame of certain footage.


Fig. 03

REMOVING UNWANTED SHADOWS

In the image above, I've circled a couple of hard-edged shadows that are the result of a bright and clear sky. When cloudy, the light source (the Sun) is covered and the light is diffused so much that you can barely make out a difference between the shadows and the rest. Therefore, the first step in the process is to make sure that your scene matches an overcast scenario. **Important note:** This translates into removing hard edges and reducing the contrast (not overall, but local) (**Fig.02**).

There are many ways to do this, and, unless you're new to Photoshop, you should be familiar with all the tools they involve. Often you will have to use a combination of these methods to reach the desired effect.

- Select the shadows (using the Color Range tool, for instance) and use a Levels adjustment layer to brighten them until they match the highlights. **Effect: reduces contrast**
- Select the shadows and duplicate them in Screen mode. **Effect: reduces contrast**
- If the local area around the shadow doesn't hold too much texture information you can use the Smudge tool (with care!) to blend the colours and edges. **Effect: removes hard edges and possibly reduces contrast**
- You can also use the Dodge tool (with care – don't overdo it!) to brighten up certain shadows
- Alternatively, if you want to keep texture

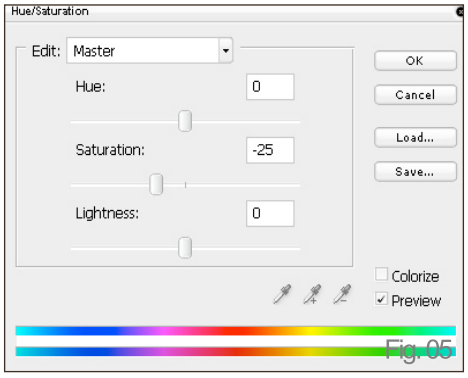


Fig. 05

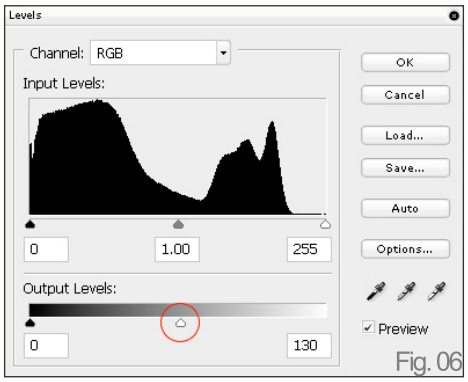


Fig. 06


Fig. 04

information over a uniform object (such as a wall) you can use the Clone Stamp tool, set to Pen Pressure, to lightly overlay highlighted parts over the shadows. **Effect: reduces contrast and (depending on how well you've used it) removes hard edges.**

- You can also use a Levels adjustment layer and paint into its mask so it affects just the shadows. Effect: reduces contrast

Here's an example of a before and after (**Fig.03**).


Fig. 07

PREPARING AND ADDING THE NEW SKY

Obviously, we need an overcast and cloudy sky for our scene. You can sample it from a single source, but it's usually a good idea too combine several sources for a more dramatic effect.

In my case, I've combined 3 different sources, as well as painting over, to assure proper lighting and blending. I've then brought it in using the masking technique, which I've shown you in previous parts of this tutorial series (**Fig.04**).


Fig. 08

MATCHING THE SCENE

Now we need to tone down the rest of the scene to match both the sky and the scenario. We will have to bring down the saturation and also darken it. We will bring down the saturation using a Hue/Saturation layer (**Fig.05**) and we'll darken it using two identical Levels layers, half valued (**Fig.06**). The result of just one of the Levels layers can be seen here (**Fig.07**).

The reason I used two layers is because I wanted to simulate hints of light passing through the clouds by painting in the second one's mask, and I thought this would give me better control. The result of both layers can be seen here (**Fig.08**).


Fig. 10

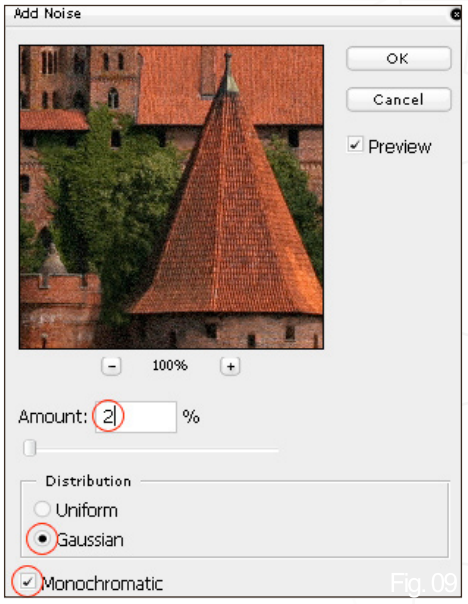


Fig. 09

Finally, we adjust the entire scene by slightly changing the colour tones, using a Color Balance layer on top of everything set to Green +5 and Cyan +3. This way, all the elements nicely blend in.

Another important thing is to match the grain of the land with that of the sky (and also, if you go further into compositing you should add more dynamic grain to darker areas). To add noise, go to Filter > Noise > Add Noise and use a slightly lower value than that of the sky (Fig. 09).

We should also take care at this point of small depth details, such as painting haze over the distant hills (**Fig.10**).

FINAL STEPS

Although this is not a matte painting part and is more of an illustrative element, we can also add rain to enhance the feeling of our scene. The fastest way to do this is to create a new layer and fill it with black. Then, using the same noise filter with a value of 15-20, add some noise to the scene. Finally, use the Filter > Blur > Motion Blur to simulate rain drops from the noise. Set this layer mode to Screen and you're done!

Here is what I got in the end (**Fig.11**).
I hope this part of the tutorial has helped and will help you with your own matte painting projects. I'll see you in the next part of the series!

TIBERIUS VIRIS

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Fig. 11

"THERE REALLY ARE NO LIMITS TO WHAT IS CONSIDERED A CONCEPTUAL CREATURE. THERE ARE ONLY DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN NATURALISTIC DESIGNS AND WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED ALIEN OR EVEN MAGICAL CREATURES".



DESIGN 101
CREATURE



PART 1: MARCH ISSUE 027

Starting Base for Your Designs: Reference Library

PART 2: APRIL ISSUE 028

The Next Step Into Imaginary Creature Anatomy

PART 3: MAY ISSUE 029

Design Process, Bone Structure & Skin Texture

PART 4: JUNE ISSUE 030

Head Design, Eyes and Construction of the Mouth

PART 5: JULY ISSUE 031

Body Structure, Body Variations, Hands & Feet

PART 6: AUGUST ISSUE 032

Colours, Patterns and Final Renderings

CREATURE DESIGN 101

PART 2 – CREATURE ANATOMY

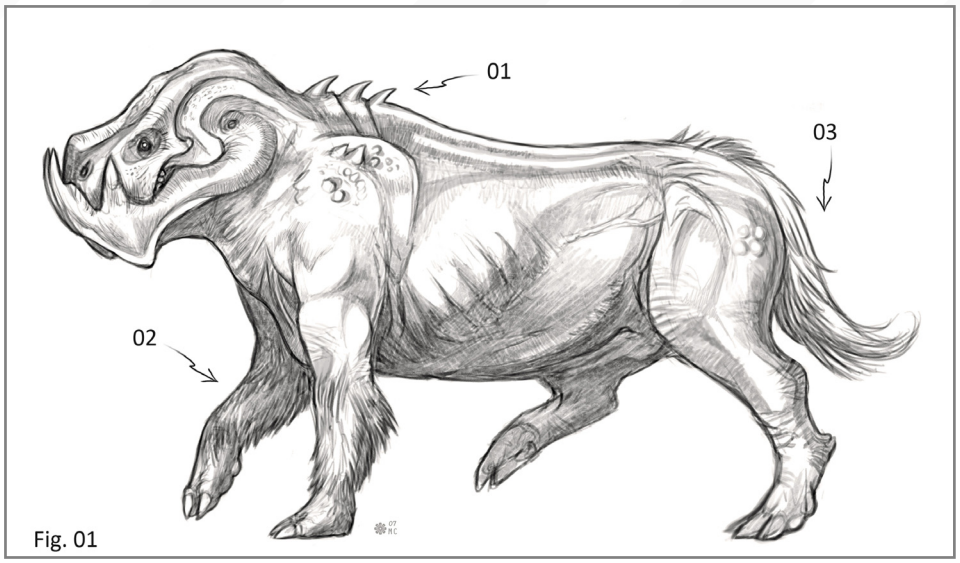


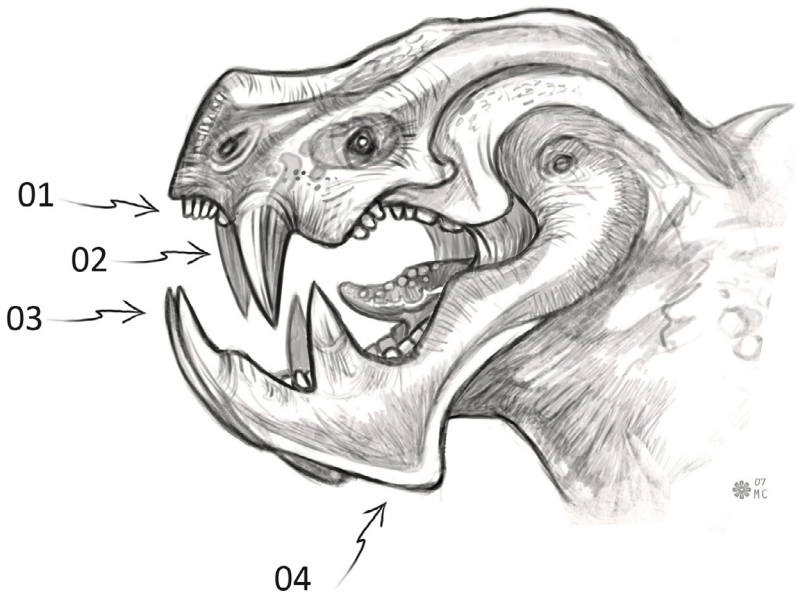
Fig. 01

CREATURE DESIGN PROCESS 101

Over the course of this series what I'll be discussing is a huge array of information and a breakdown in the construction of conceptual design with regard to creatures. All areas of creature design will be touched upon, providing you with the necessary information to create your own unique concepts from scratch. This series is not going to be set up as a step-by-step tutorial, but as a much more informative guide into the philosophy behind the make-up of an imaginary creature. Each lesson will touch upon a specific important aspect in what makes a great creature. I'll even provide a little advice as to what to stay away from, in order to steer clear of badly designed, or generally dull creatures.

Over this six-part lesson, you'll gradually obtain a reference library stretching from the basics in animal anatomy to much more complex ways of exploring what is actually possible and plausible, or what would be considered thinking "outside the box". There really are no limits to what is considered a conceptual creature, there are only distinctions between naturalistic designs (which are generally more plausible designs based upon rules) and what would be considered alien or even magical creatures (which are endless in the limitation of ideas).

Fig. 02



TAKING THE NEXT STEP INTO IMAGINARY CREATURE ANATOMY

INTRODUCTION

In Part 1 we discussed the Animal Kingdom, the various types of animals, the families they fall under, and how they differ from one another. I finished with a quick manipulation to the anatomy of an existing Mammal to show you how all creature design derives from the study of real-world life-forms.

In this lesson, we'll be exploring how to create naturalistic, imaginary creatures by drawing on similar aspects of design and anatomy that exist in real-world animals. A naturalistic approach to creature design abides by certain rules to coincide with that of true animal anatomy. Naturalistic creatures are unique and original designs but they stick to the traits of each class type, be it mammal, bird, fish, reptile, amphibian, insect, crustacean or arachnid. This means that, although they are creatures, they won't be devils; they won't be aliens or completely fictional in body structure.

With an understanding of how animals within our own world work, between the different types of bone structures and body types, it will be much easier to design something that doesn't

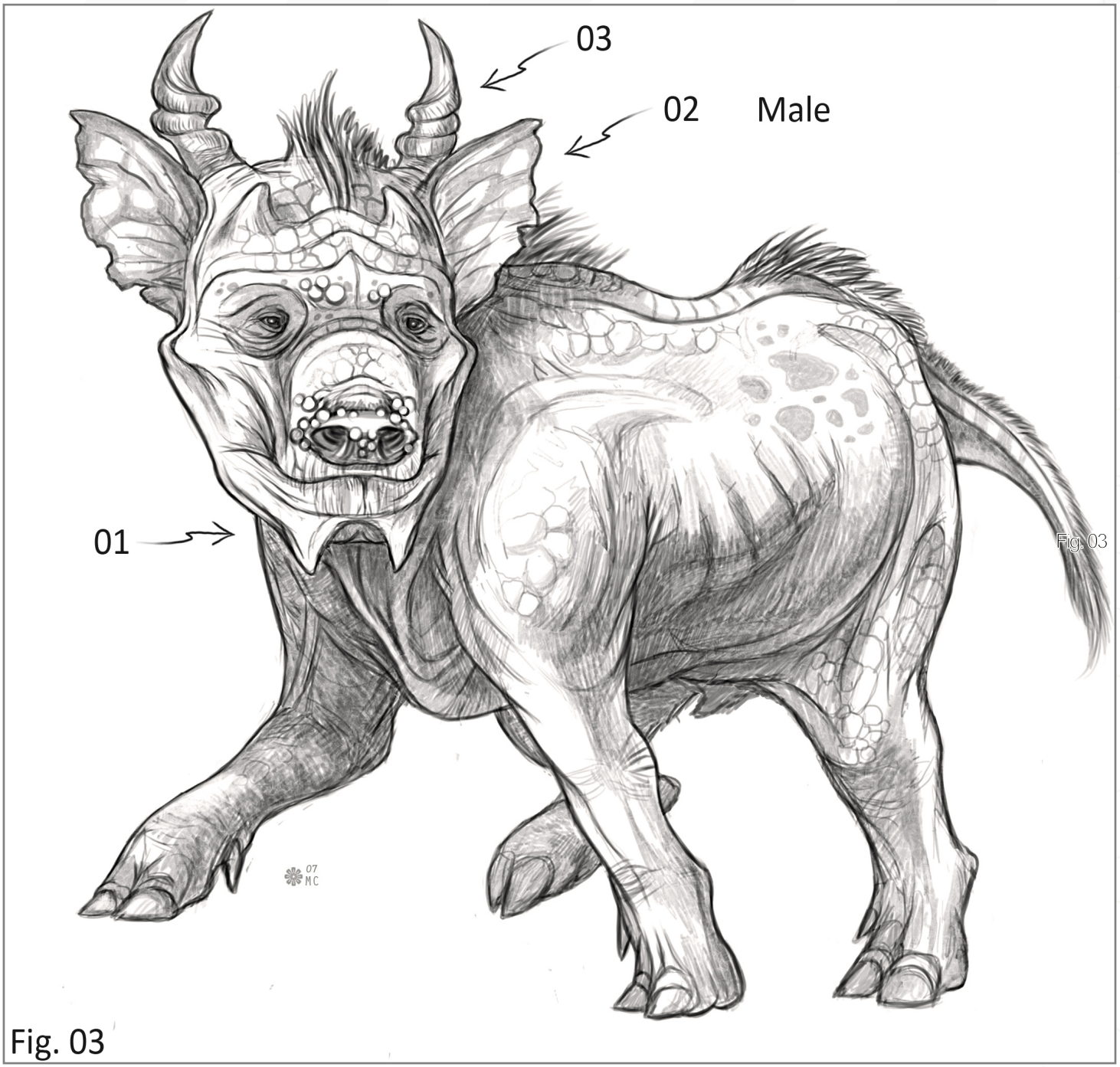


Fig. 03

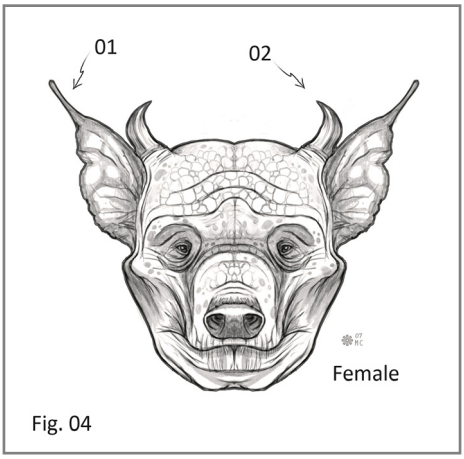


Fig. 04

exist. You can mix and match portions of animals, although it's important to make sure that they blend well together. You don't want to just slap the head of a tiger onto the body of a fish, because while mythology boasts gods and creatures like that, in reality it wouldn't flow well. It is possible to give a fish-like creature distinctive features that would resemble a tiger's face, but you need to keep in mind how the eyes work under water, how it breathes under water and why a fish contains scales, not fur. So when you mix and match aspects of one animal with another, remember what is actually plausible and what defines the class the creature falls under.

Classes of animals that share similarities in reproduction, such as laying eggs (Birds, Amphibians and Reptiles, and as a sub-category: Insects, Crustaceans and Arachnids), will often share other features too. The three classes of invertebrates are closely related in their biological designs,

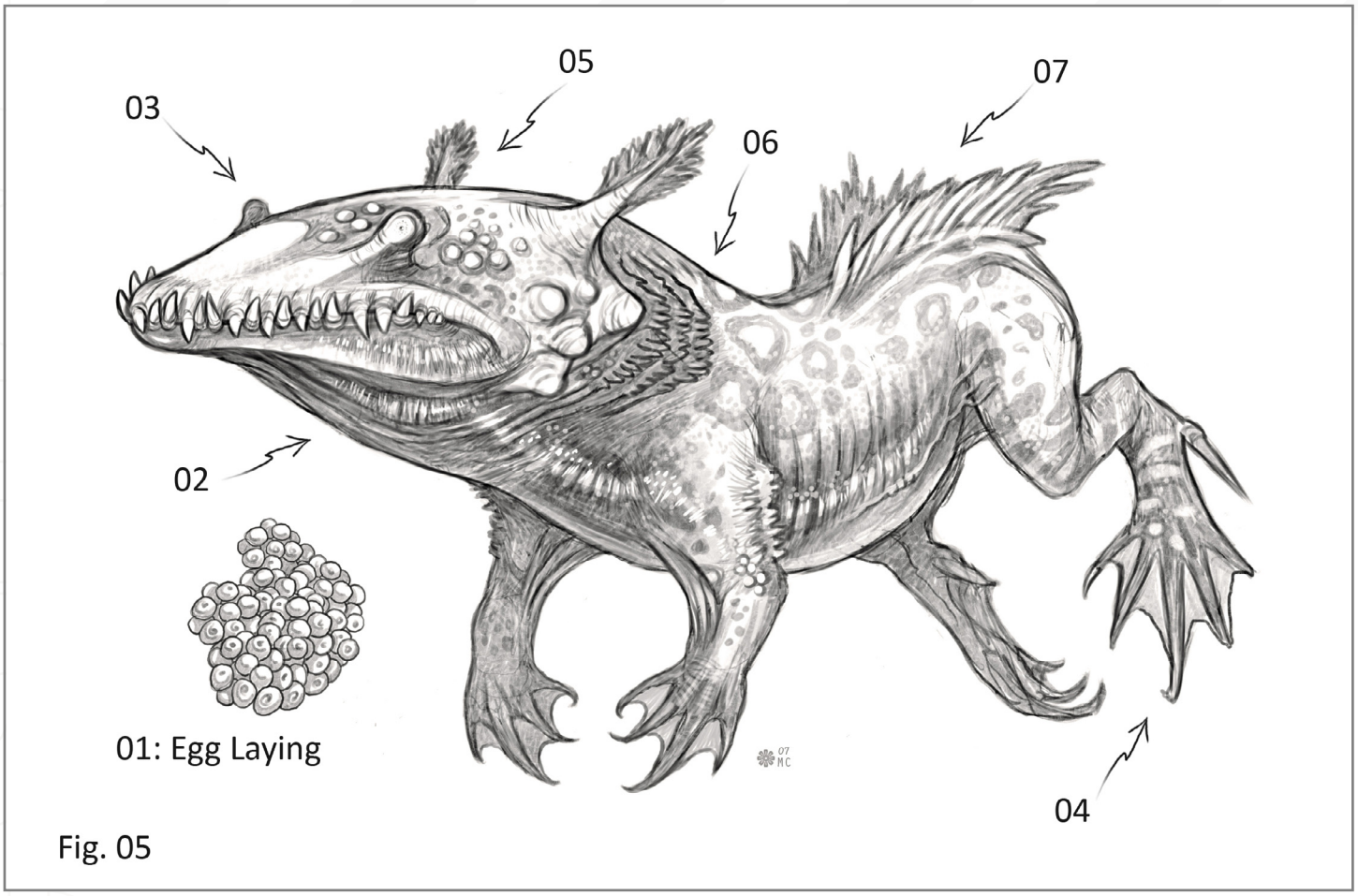


Fig. 05

consisting of multiple body parts and exoskeletons. Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians also have similar body traits, so mixing and matching their limbs, skin textures and features is a good idea. In retrospect, it has already been mentioned that birds and reptiles are close in relation to dinosaurs, as well as amphibians. So think of creature design just as you would a step in evolution!

Another class that shares reproductive traits are mammals, who carry their young within the womb until they are a strong enough to enter the world. There are exceptions of course, such as the kangaroo or Tasmanian Devil, where the baby leaves the womb when they are no bigger than your pinky. Some species of mammal, like rodents, keep their babies in nest until their eyes are open and they start to grow fur on their pink skin. Usually larger mammals give birth to their young out in the open and the young will be capable of walking and even running almost immediately.

There are certain measures to be taken when thinking about the proportions of a creatures anatomy (**Fig.01**). I will go further into this in the later parts of this series, but I want to point out how they affect the overall nature of a creature. In this design you'll notice that the overall body shape resembles something of a warthog or a miniature pony. Although every area of this design was conceived through the understanding of how animal anatomy works, it was not referenced from either of those animals. Its body construction consists of a hip bone and shoulder blade that are more or less at equal height, a lengthy abdomen, and a short neck with generally short legs. This, along with the spiked vertebrae on its dorsal hump (**01**), are all designed for protection in a defensive form. The spiked vertebrae protect the back of the neck from predators. The tufts of fur on its forearms (**02**) help keep those thinner limbs warm, while also acting as a bit of a shock absorber and soft padding when it lays down. The tail, which very much resembles that of a horse (**03**) is there to help balance during running and it also serves to cool the body down and fend off annoying insects. It's important to think about why you're incorporating something into your design, even if it's simple decoration. Think about the skin texture, the body height, the strength of the animal, where it stands on the food chain, how it defends itself, how it reproduces etc.

This is also something I will go into more depth about in the later parts of this series, so I'll just cover the basic reasons behind the design of the face now (**Fig.02**). It's very important that you think about the construction of the mandible, how the jaw will manoeuvre, how the teeth, tusks or top and bottom portions of the muzzle will connect when opening and closing. **(01)** First and foremost, the teeth consist of incisors (which are at the front of the jaw), molars (which are at the back) and canines (which are usually

in between the two). Each type of tooth has its own job for chewing, tearing, ripping, crunching or grinding food. **(02)** These much larger pointed teeth are canines, though they could be considered tusks. They are not visible in the full body sketch because they are fitted into a hollowed section between the lower canines and the extension of the mandible **(04)**. By extending this portion of the lower jaw it gives the creature a unique look but it is actually serving a purpose. **(03**) A third set of canines to be used more like tusks are positioned at the lower front of the jaw and extend past the muzzle. All sets of the large tusk-like incisors are meant to crush bone and pierce flesh. Although as this creature is a herbivore, they are used purely for defence - much like those of a Hippo.

A quick glance and the viewer might identify this creature as some sort of pig, hog or even a bat-like faced design (**Fig.03**)**.** It has a stout little body; it's short and bulky with hoofed toes and a thick almost scaly hide. A much more muscular body and longer legs in comparison to the body weight allows this fictional creature to run much quicker than an actual pig. It has a much shorter muzzle comprised of two sets of horns, one which is still embedded beneath the skin causing small protrusions and the other much larger twisted horns **(03)**. The larger horns server as a means of defense and male rivalry during mating season. **(02)** Large thin bat-like ears are very sensitive alerting the creature of any nearby danger. **(01)** Similar to the first creature, the lower jaw has hollow pockets to fit slightly oversized canines that the creature used to crush bone and tear flesh.

in **Fig.04** it shows the female version of the creature in **Fig.03**. As you can see, the female differs from the male in both large and subtle ways. There are reasons for this, which I'll explain through the design choices that I've made. One of the main differences is the size of the horns, shape of the horns or even lack

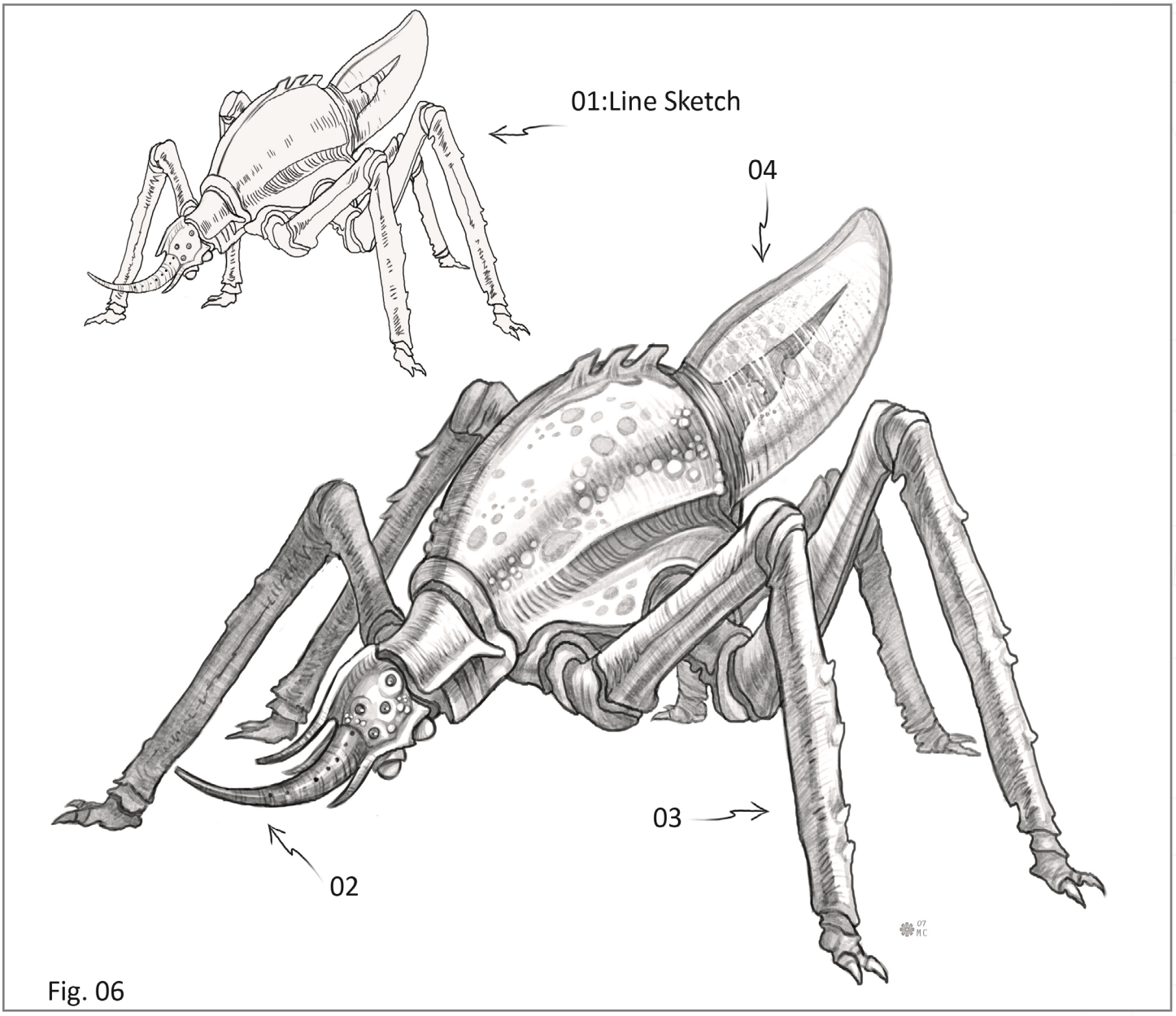
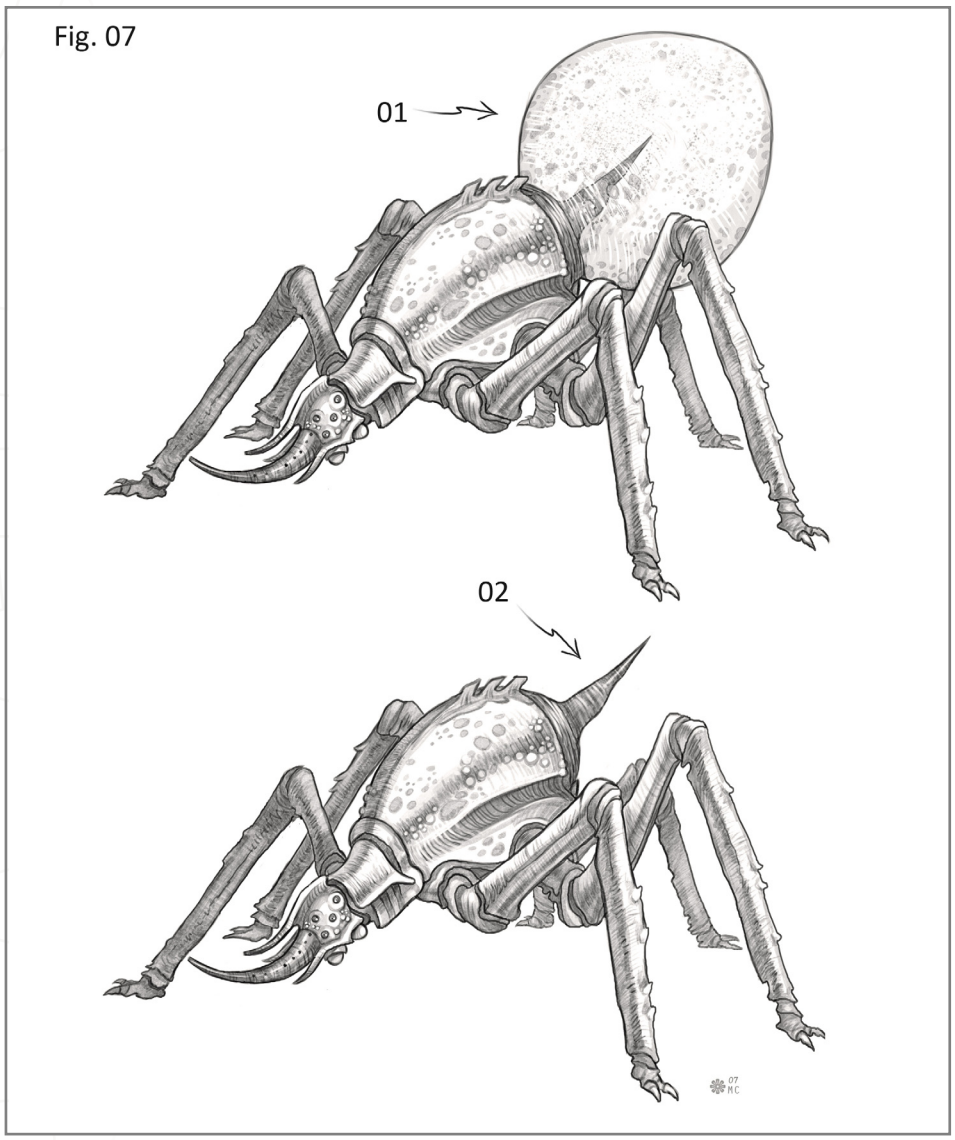


Fig. 06

thereof. Many male deer have antlers whereas the females do not, though the males will shed their horns. The female face of this creature consist of much smaller horns **(02)** that are only slightly curved and not as twisted as the male's larger horns. They are meant for defense against predators, but not as rivalry fighting. The female also lacks the secondary set of horns and warty, larger nose of the male. Overall the female has a slimmer, less bumpy face and a thinner sleeker body. **(01)** In addition, the females have a long tip at the end of each ear with a bulbous tip that heightens their senses. There is a lack of hair atop the head and along the back and they have smaller canines. In short, it has more feminine features that are more appealing than the male's.
These differences, along with overall size, weight and colour variations, can be seen in the opposite sex of lions, deer, birds, pigs, goats, and elephants to name a few.

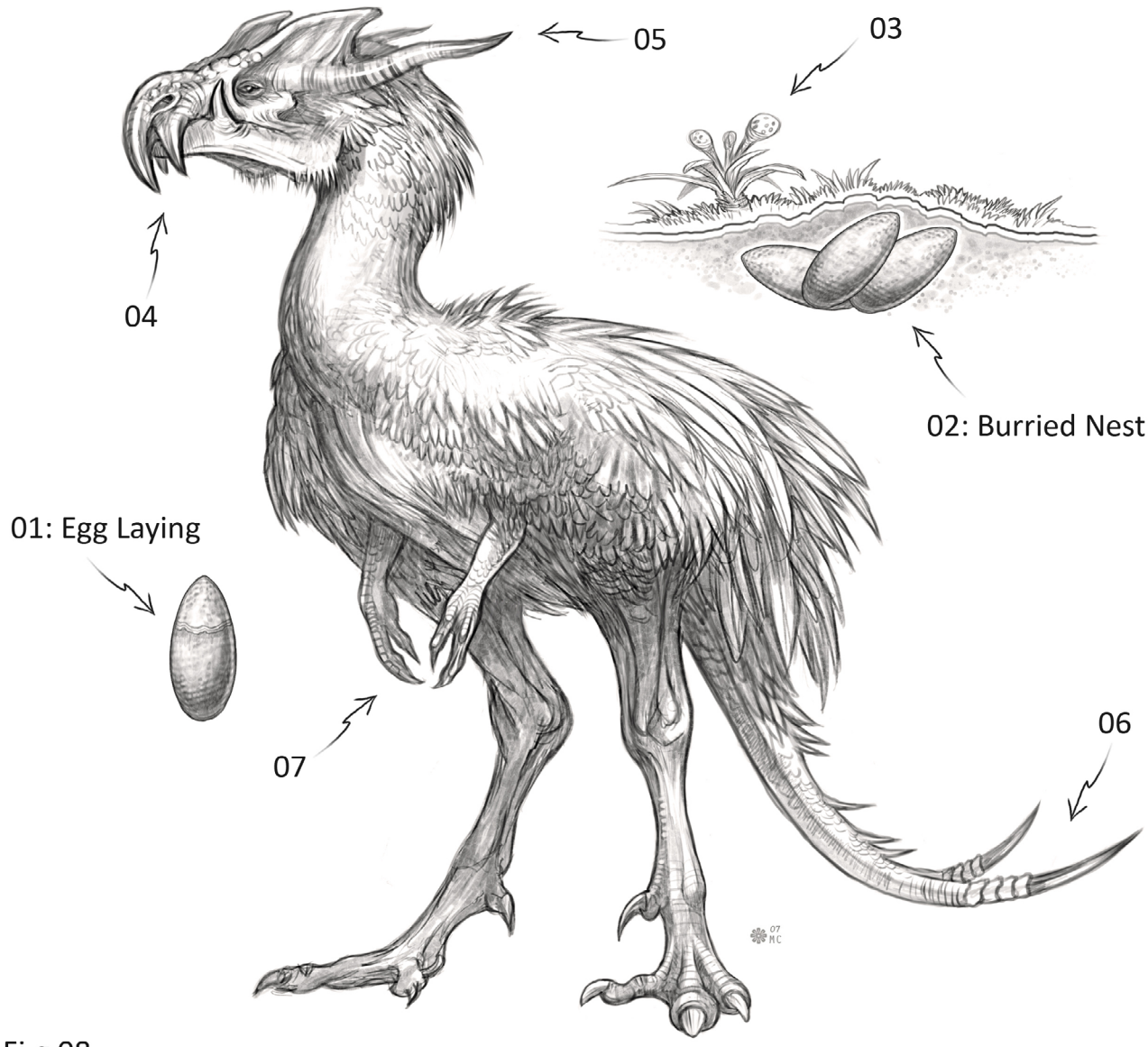
An Amphibian based creature, which is also an egg-laying species (**Fig. 05**). They will usually lay clusters of tiny soft eggs stuck together in clumps **(01)** until they hatch as tadpoles or larvae. **(02)** A large sack of loose skin under the lower jaw and neck allows the creature to create a distinctive vocal call which echoes through the night. This is their way of communicating with others of its kind and for mating calls. **(03)** The eyes are found at the top of the head not at the sides like most mammals and birds. The reason for this is because amphibians, and some reptiles like crocodiles or turtles, will rise to the top of the water, only allowing their eyes or nostrils to breech the surface. **(04)** Although this creature resembles a frog or a crossbreed between that and a newt, it has some modified differences that set it apart from any known amphibians. The longer, webbed legs allow for quick swimming and leaping but also serve as a defensive kicking mechanism with the addition of a spiked poisonous spur. It also has a heavier, more sturdy jaw lined with rows of sharp flesh-tearing teeth. **(05)** Similar to species of newt, it has external gills as well as fish-like gills **(06)**. This makes it capable of surviving in low oxygenated water pools as well as larger lakes and ponds. The frilled gills around the neck region can be tightly closed and internal gills can allow the creature to breath air for long periods of time. This makes it possible for the creature to move from one location to another if a pond becomes dry. **(07)** A pair of fin-like appendages are found on the rear to act as rudders and allow for quick maneuvering underwater.

Fig. 07



Heading on to the wonderful world of conceptual insects (**Fig. 06**), we have a creature that consist of an exoskeleton with multiple limbs **(03)** and eyes. Creatures that resemblance invertebrates can be much more decorative in design without there having to be as much reasoning behind your decisions. Spikes, bumps and other imperfections in the exoskeleton can serve many purposes, but may also just be there for a unique design. **(01)** Generally for all creature designing I'll use something similar to the sketching method of leaving your pen on the paper and working the design out in one stroke. Then there is always the method of laying the design out in major shapes to later refine them in detail. Whichever result works best, it's usually helpful to work out a clean line sketch that can be changed easily. You'll notice the repositioning of the limbs on this creature from the initial line work to the more refined sketch.

(02) This long thin tube contains a proboscis much like that of a butterfly. It's face is harmless but that doesn't mean the creature doesn't have



Fi.g 08

other means of defence. **(04)** In the current state the sack is half full.

In **Fig. 07** when the creature is startled, or feels threatened it will quickly disperse a fowl and very powerful gas that fills the sack to a large bulbous shape **(01)**. This thin membrane is capable of stretching to an enormous size until it bursts and releases the noxious gases inside allowing the critter to quickly scurry off, unharmed.

(02) In addition to this defence, once the sack has burst it is still equipped with a poisonous stinger until it is capable of reproducing another membrane. If cornered the creature will continue to face its rear toward any predator, lifting its stinger as a warning.

Striving for something between the Jurassic and the modern day birds and dinosaurs, this creature contains elements of both with a few conceptual twists in its anatomy (**Fig. 08**). A large bipedal bird of prey, containing large talons on the ankles of its feet and a deadly fork pronged beak, this is a dangerous species. **(01)** Like its ancestors and the inspiration for its design, it is an egg laying creature. **(02)** It creates a nest underground that is lightly covered with dirt and a poisonous species of plant **(03)** is placed nearby to ward off any herbivores that might trample the eggs.

(04) Its three pronged beak can produce a deadly wound acting more like downward facing tusk or large canines. **(05)** It is also equipped with rear facing horns to defend and protect the back of its head and neck during attack. Adding yet another means of attack and defense, I've given it a tail reminiscent of a dinosaur or lizard containing a split spike ended tip. **(07)** It also has two small, vestigial limbs much like a T-Rex.

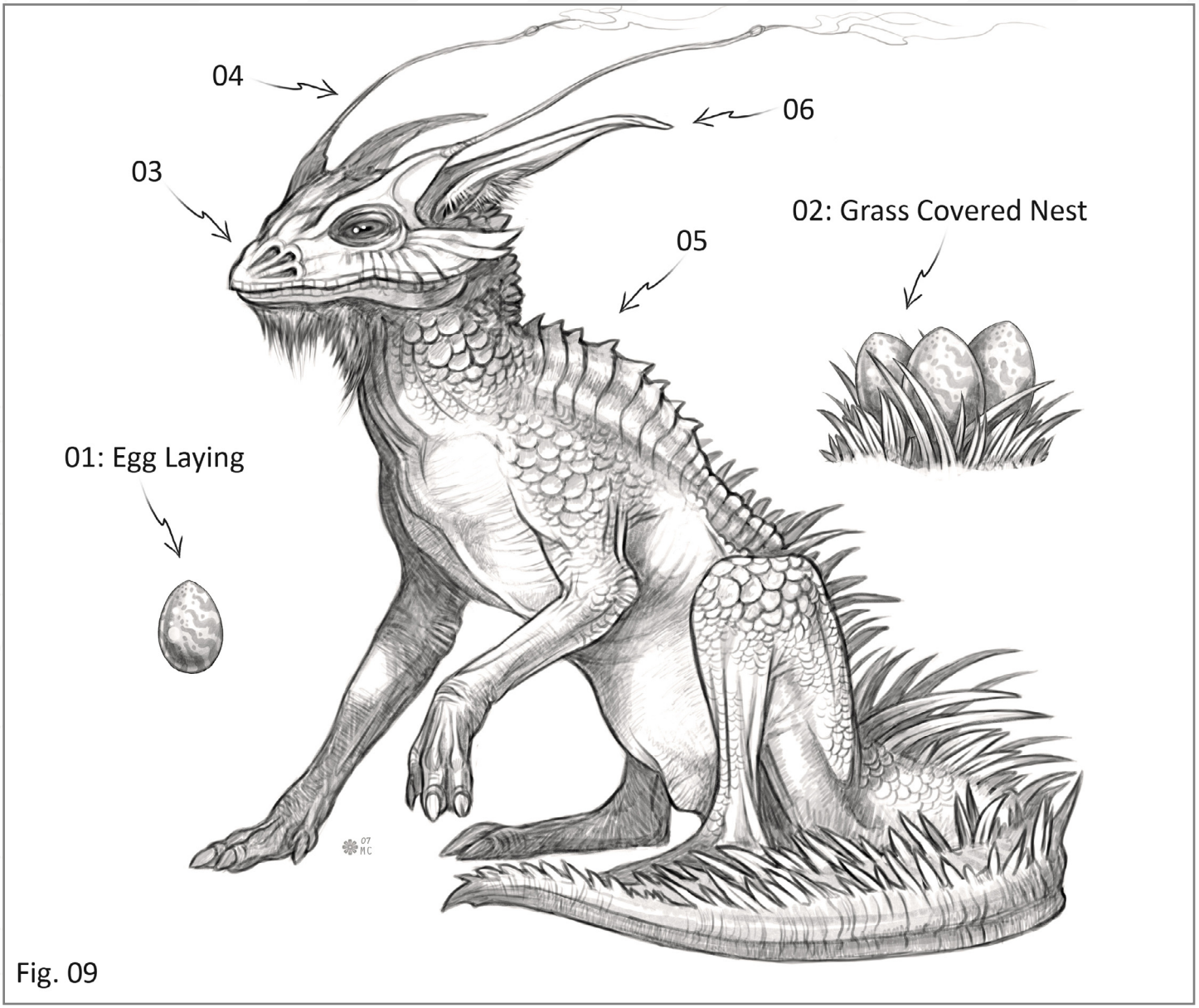


Fig. 09

These are used to help it up when its lying on its side, if knocked down or sleeping, as well as for clasping on to prey during attack.

It's clear that this species is based on a genetic lizard (**Fig. 09**), but there are additions that set it apart from true reptiles or any existing lizard. **(01)** It's an egg laying breed, usually small soft-shelled eggs in groups of three to six which are hidden in grass covered nest **(02)**. Setting it apart from modern day lizards, it has the body structure of a mammal, with short nails or hoofed-like toes split in sets of two and three toes. Longer legs are designed for an upright running position, unlike the sideward motion and position of lizards legs, which are generally lower to the ground. **(03)** It's nasal cavity is split into three sets of nostrils each leading to distinct sets of lungs to conserve oxygen, allowing it to breath in and out of one set while it stores air in the others. **(04)** A pair of long, thin antenna-like appendages act as extra sensory limbs which are also flickered in a quick back and forth motion to ward off predators and confuse them. **(05)** Usually the most vulnerable parts of any animal, the back is lined with an extremely tough scaled and spiked hump leading down to a thick powerful tail. **(06)** To set the creature apart from any reptile or dinosaur, it contains a pair of mammal-like ears for extra sensitive hearing.
I hope information in this part of the series has opened your eyes as to why it's important to relate to real-world animals, and also why there needs to be clear reasoning behind your design choices. Check back soon for the next portion of this series, which will focus on walking, running and skin texture diagrams.

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"I use a basic paint brush and the smudge brush to paint hair. Sometimes I'll even change the brush to 1 pixel to paint each single strand of hair. There is no shortcut to painting - you just need patience."

With the aid of Photoshop, Yu Cheng Hong takes us through the creation of his image 'Kai'

KAI

MAKING OF BY YU CHENG HONG

MAKING OF KAI

CREATED IN:

Photoshop CS2

Hello everyone! Here I'm going to explain the process of painting my character, Kai. In this 'Making Of', I will not go into every single detail; I will just show you my working process and what tools I prefer to use, and I hope that will be useful for you all. If have any suggestions or better working methods then please feel free to contact me.

INTRODUCTION

This character is one of my personal projects, and here is a brief description of the character. He looks like he's full of energy, but is without patience and has a childlike quality. He has brown skin, short hair and is between 18 and 22 years old. Okay, so now we have an idea of the type of character I had in mind, let's go into how I followed through with my idea.

CONCEPT + SKETCHES

I started out with this very rough sketch (**Fig01**), to try and discover what he would look like, what clothes he would wear and the type of pose he would be shown in. After sketching, I decided that the perspective I'd used to illustrate my character was too 'normal', and I wanted the



Fig01



Fig02

character design to look more exaggerated and interesting. And so I sketched again until I was satisfied (**Fig02**) and then I started blocking in some colour.

Here I will introduce the tools I used most often:

Paint Tool: I always use Photoshop's basic paint brush tool (**Fig03**) – it's enough for me!
Smudge Tool: I often use this tool for blending colour (**Fig04**).

Paint Hair/Fur Tool: I often use this tool to paint hair and fur; it is Photoshop's default brush (Nature Brush). I find this one useful for making fuzzy or hairy texture (**Fig05**).

COLOUR BLOCKING

Now, I know this guy should have a brown skin tone, with maybe yellow or black hair, and I want his costume to have even more vibrant colour to match his personality!

Okay, so this is the basic colour blocking stage. For this layer of colour I used Multiply mode, and at this stage I was still considering where the light would be coming from. The yellow circle in the image shows where the

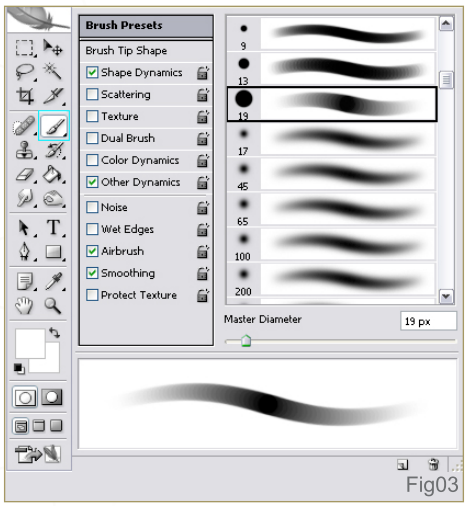


Fig03

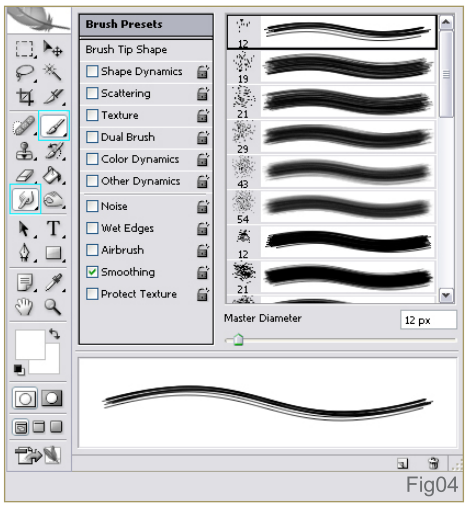


Fig04

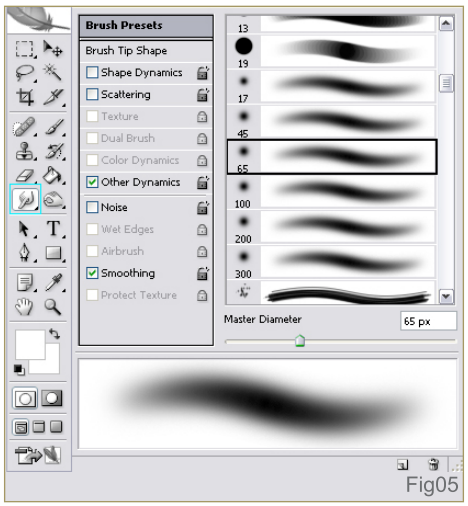


Fig05


Fig06


Fig07

light is coming from (**Fig06**). I continued with more shading work **(Fig07)**, working on the volume and changing some of the design – sometimes this just happens when painting in the colouring stage! As I mentioned earlier, I used the smudge tool for blending colour (**Fig08**).

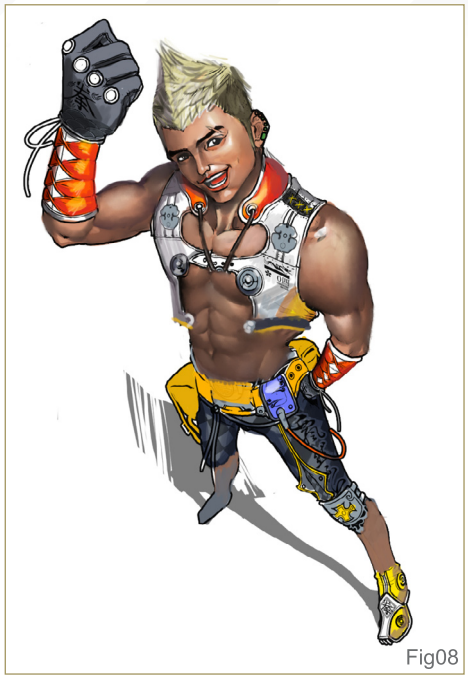

Fig08


Fig09

I carried on working in more detail and made some further adjustments. I used the Hue/ Saturation settings to make the skin lighter and the Transform tool to make the eyes bigger **(Fig09)**. I always change back to black and white mode to check the values – it's important, for me. Sometimes you can lose contrast when you paint in colour, so it's good to do this in order to make sure everything is looking good and contrasts correctly (**Fig10**).


Fig10

PAINTING HAIR

Here is a step-by-step to show how I paint hair (**Fig11a - f**). I use a basic paint brush and the smudge brush to paint hair. Sometimes I'll even change the brush to 1 pixel to paint each single strand of hair. There is no shortcut to painting - you just need patience.

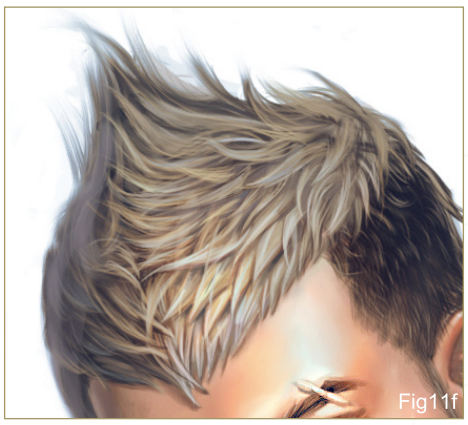

Fig11a


Fig11b


Fig11c


Fig11d


Fig11e


Fig11f



THE FINISHED PIECE

After all the detailing work, it was finally finished (**Fig12**). I hope you found this 'Making Of' useful. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to email me.

Thanks for reading!

MAKING OF: KAI

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Fig11

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MAKING OF BY NICOLAS FRANCOEUR

THE ANTAGONIST



"TO GET THE TWISTED LOOK I WAS AIMING FOR. I TRIED TO INCORPORATE FREUDIAN SYMBOLS INTO THE DESIGN: THE DUALITY BETWEEN THANATOS"

Vorace aka Nicolas Francoeur shares how he created his image, 'The Antagonist' ...

THE ANTAGONIST

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop

Hi! Welcome to this 'Making Of', where I will try my best to explain the choices I made during the creation of 'The Antagonist'.

STEP 1:

The goal for this picture was to create a piece called 'The Antagonist', with a horror and science-fiction setting. I already knew I wanted to create a female character with a huge and weird mask.

I started by doing fast sketches to explore new ideas (**Fig01 - Fig04**). At this stage, I usually listen to some good, inspiring music and just draw until my pages are filled. Appropriate music really helps me to get in the mood of a drawing (it's hard to draw a twisted antagonist while listening to some pop rubbish!) I also search for inspiration related to the subject in some of my many art books. I can spend from 20 minutes to 3 or 4 hours sketching. It really depends on my mood and the level of details I want for each sketch.


Fig. 05

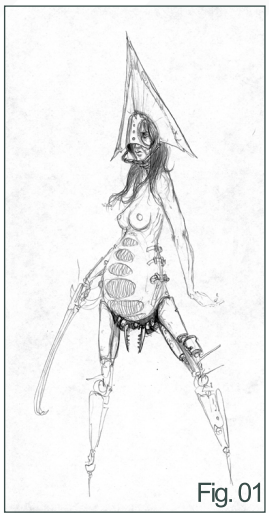
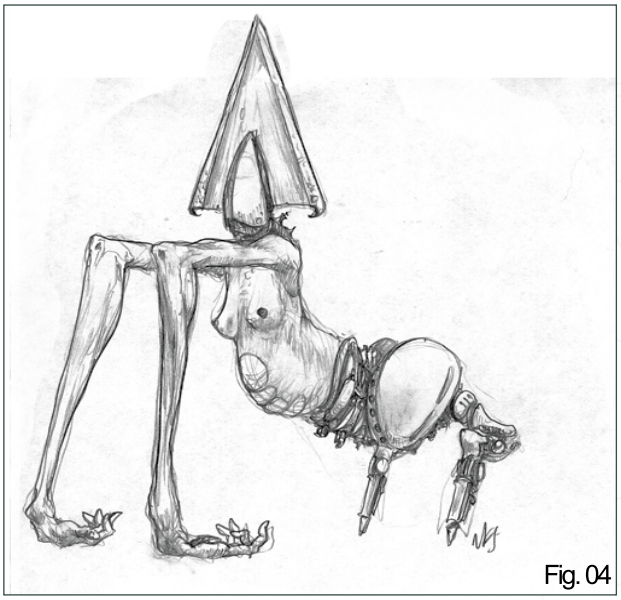

Fig. 01


Fig. 02


Fig. 03


Fig. 04

To get the twisted look I was aiming for, I tried to incorporate Freudian symbols into the design; the duality between Thanatos (the death drive, represented by a painful metal mask) and Eros (the life drive; the woman's naked body). After I was done, I scanned in the one I was most satisfied with and started to tweak it in Photoshop (**Fig05**).

STEP 2:

I increased the size of the sketch to be able to draw small details. I usually work at 3000 pixels, because I want to be able to draw little details without crashing my not-so-fast computer. After the initial size adjustments, I re-drew some parts of the sketch until I was satisfied. Sometimes the digital version ends up being very different from the original, but I consider it all part of the artistic process. I don't condemn myself to follow my pencil sketch, line by line.

After that, I put the sketch on Multiply mode and created a layer under it. I threw in some rough colours to set the atmosphere. I wanted it to be cold, lifeless and surreal, so I chose a dark teal


Fig. 06


Fig. 08

for the background and the mechanical body, and gold for the mask and some robotic parts. I played with the Color Balance (Ctrl + B) to add a little bit more green everywhere and I created a new layer above just to get rid of the line art. I then set up my light source and rendered the lighting. I didn't waste time with details; I focused more on the overall look (**Fig06**).

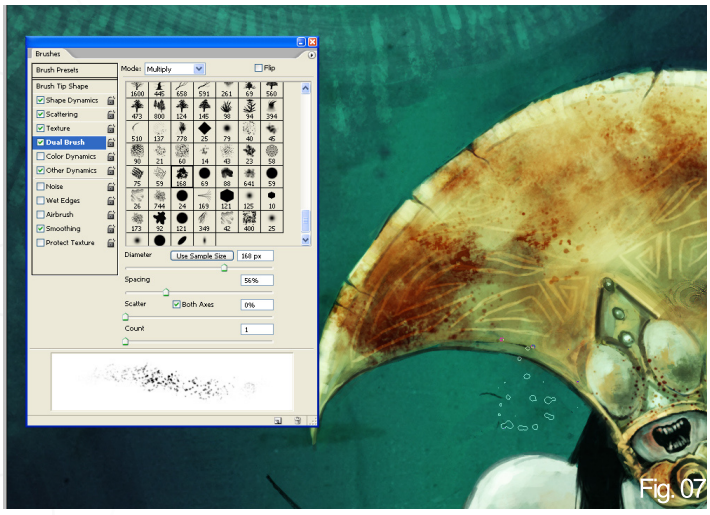
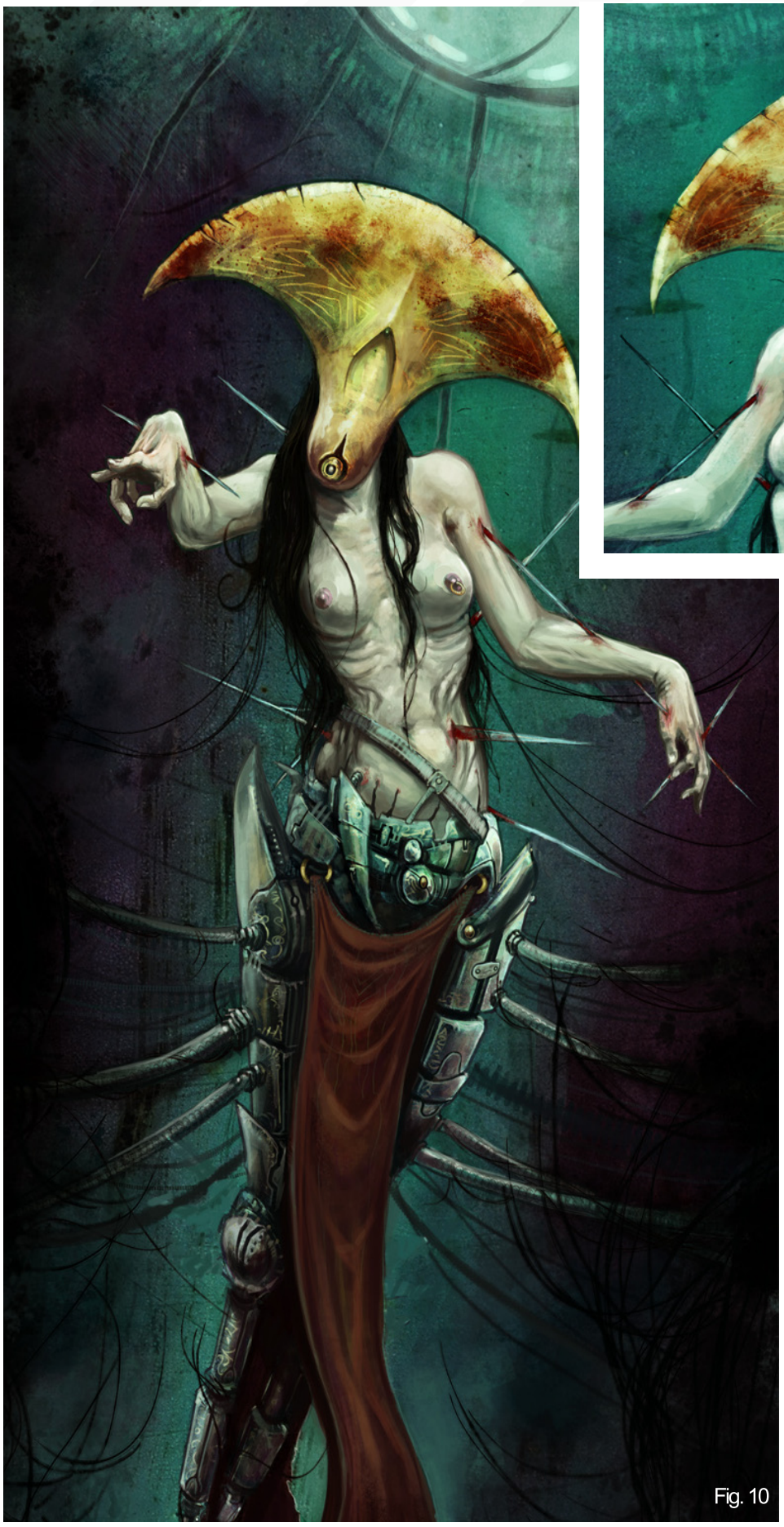


Fig. 07


Fig. 09


Fig. 10

STEP 3:

Now I started to refine the picture. I threw some rusty textures in to add grittiness to the image. I usually put them on a separate layer, on Overlay mode. This helps a lot to create interesting shapes. I also played with my huge collection of custom brushes. Custom brushes can really speed your process, but just make sure that you're not dependent on them! I also amplified the contrast and added a dramatic aspect to the lighting. I added more blood on the mask to re-enforce the horror aspect, and to give a sense of inherent danger (**Fig07** & **Fig08**).

At this point I frequently flip the picture to make sure I have a fresh look on it. I still wasn't sure of the exact look I wanted for the mask and I continually made changes to it. I kept them on separate layers to be able to come back with different versions until I chose one permanently. I decided, finally, that I didn't want any part of the face visible. A faceless antagonist would look colder and less human; you can imagine anything under a strange and sharp helmet! I added long and serpentine-like hair in the background, connecting with the Antagonist, to add a little creepiness (**Fig09 & Fig10**).



Fig. 11

STEP 4:

Now it's my favourite part – the details! I added runes and industrial lines on the legs and I reworked the breast of the antagonist. I used references to get it right (with a purely artistic eye) and to lose the 'fake' look. I added gold repetition on the lower part of the image to balance it. I tweaked the colours again. I added another draped garment slightly higher than the first one to get rid of the hard demarcation between the organic and mechanic halves of the body. I realised that the long spike going through



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

her left arm and her hand wasn't logical, so I painted over and corrected it. (**Fig11, Fig12 & Fig13**).

STEP 5:

It's almost done! I sharpened the edges a little bit and saved it. C'est finit! (**Fig14**).

VORACE AKA NICOLAS FRANCOEUR

For more from this artist visit

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Fig. 14

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"FIGURING OUT WHICH WERE MY FAVOURITE TOOLS IN PAINTER TOOK ME AROUND THREE MONTHS. AND I LIKE TO STICK TO THE ONES THAT I HAVE FOUND TO BE MY FAVOURITES. BUT PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO TRY OUT NEW TOOLS IN YOUR OWN WORK; AFTER ALL, EACH TO THEIR OWN!"

Read how Anne Pogoda created her image "Stranded" ...

MAKING OF BY ANNE POGODA

STRANDED

STRANDED

CREATED IN:

Painter

INTRODUCTION

Some of you may remember that I wrote a tutorial about painting basic landscapes with Painter in Issue 24. Well I was also recently asked to write a "Making Of" for one of my more matte painting style image creations, "Stranded" (**Fig01**), which was also handled in Painter. Hopefully you've already found some joy in playing around with the first collection of tools which I introduced in the previous tutorial, and I hope that you will in turn find this "Making Of" inspirational.

Figuring out which were my favourite tools in Painter took me around three months, and I like to stick to the ones that I have found to be my favourites. But please don't hesitate to try out new tools in your own work; after all, each to their own!

In this little "Making Of" I'm going to discuss the importance of colour schemes and composition, as well as what happens to parts of environments that are in the distance. These are all elements that I dealt with in this piece and I would like to share my discoveries with you in the hope that it will help you to take a new look at your own work, as well as the world around you.



Fig01



Fig02

LANDSCAPES

I'm going to start by focusing on types of landscapes. In general, there are two types of landscapes: the first is the kind that is seen as a standalone illustration, which means that the illustration has to be interesting enough to keep the viewer entertained on its own; the other is the "supporting" kind, which is used to give any kind of character a space to exist in.

"Stranded" (**Fig01**) was created for Ballistic Publishing's "Matte Painting 2" book and is actually one of the few paintings that I have immensely enjoyed working on! I was listening to a song about a zeppelin while painting and was pretty much finished after just six hours. Happily, I sat back and observed what I had just done and had problems actually believing just how much fun I had had with it. So I looked for a matte painting forum to share my joy with other matte painters ... and was immediately told that what I had done was "rubbish", because it was in the wrong format and there was too much hand-painting. Being blamed for painting too much by hand is something that has never happened to me before. My approach to matte painting may seem a little "old fashioned" to some, but maybe this way will suit you and your own style of working, so let's see…

COMPOSITION

"Stranded" is a matte painting that features photographic white houses in the centre of the piece. These photographic houses – the so-called base pattern – are surrounded by hand-painted fields, trees, and a stranded zeppelin. To keep this painting interesting, but without focusing on the zeppelin too much, I decided to place the viewing point high up in the air. This made it possible to show lots of different landscape variations that can keep the painter interested while working, and hopefully will also keep the audience interested, too.

The painting itself can easily be split up into three parts: the lowest part, which is closest to the viewer and so features darker colours; the middle part, which directs the attention to the stranded zeppelin near the houses and so features lighter colours; and the sky part, which is directly connected to the middle part because everything seen in the distance is starting to absorb the horizon's colour (**Fig02**).

COLOUR PALETTE

The palette of "Stranded" is pretty colourful. It features less saturated colours from almost the full range of the rainbow, which helps to keep it interesting. Colour variations allow you to create depth and they can also help to direct the viewers' eyes to certain things. While the clouds are held in a pinkish-white, the sky is bright blue and so this creates a colourful contrast. When clouds form up so massively, blocking the sun and absorbing some of the horizon's colour, it can create the feeling of an upcoming or descending danger, such as a thunderstorm.

The zeppelin and houses are also held in a whitish colour palette, which is enriched by greyish and brownish tones. This immediately makes them pretty interesting because they stick out from the much darker ground that surrounds them. To direct the viewers' eyes between the clouds, houses and zeppelin, it was necessary to light up the location around the houses, too. Hopefully this will draw the viewers' eyes back and forth between the zeppelin and the clouds and will prevent them from jumping somewhere else or leaving the picture entirely (**Fig03**).

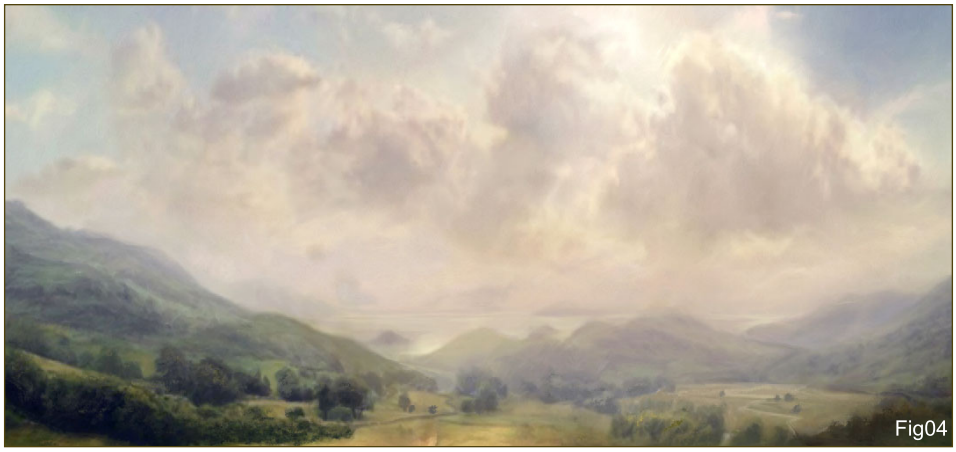
THE HORIZON

When I was younger and just starting to become seriously interested in being a painter, it was obvious that I would start to see the world that surrounds me with different eyes. One major aspect of this was trying to find out what exact colours an object consisted of, or why some things seemed to be very realistic in paintings while others weren't. I can remember sitting in a car and being able to observe a massive range of fields and trees, which made me realise – with astonishment – how the colour of the horizon was influencing the environment! I understood then that areas of the tress which were closest to me, which seemed to be so dark that they could be black, were actually a deep purple. And as I turned my head I was able to see that the trees in the distance became more


Fig03

and more bluish, and that this bluish tone was actually coming from the horizon. To be honest, this trick is quite simple, but since I had never been introduced to such facts before this was enough to amaze me and keep me busy!

On the large screenshot that I have provided (**Fig04**), you can observe this fact very clearly. Because all objects and subjects influence each other on their colour-related behaviour, I decided to make the colours of the environment and sky very similar at the point were they meet, and to enrich the blue of the sky once it is further away from the environment. Choosing the right colour for the horizon can also be very important when you're trying to make a painting convincing. To name an example, I have noticed that in a lot of new games recently, the horizon is now held in a pretty bright colour which makes it much more convincing than the simple blue skies that were seen in games of the past.


Fig04

LIGHTING

I must admit that I've never been that good with light because I've never really had to work

with convincing light sources. On “Stranded”, however, this matter is much simpler; since the world is seen from above, I didn’t have to make up my mind too much about how the light would look on the three-dimensional objects. The only thing I had to worry about was the position of the sun and the clouds, which would possibly not be seen by the viewer.

There are also some lit areas within the painting though, which help to draw the viewers’ attention to certain spots. Of course, these lit areas should find their explanation in a convincing light source, and since we see everything from above I simply had to imagine where there would be clouds, and the problem was pretty much solved there and then! By painting a massive number of clouds that partly cover the sun, I suggest to the viewer that there may be more clouds around that influence the lighting situation and so it is easy to say, “This could be possible and is still convincing” – and the topic is solved (**Fig05**).



Fig05

DETAIL

In “Stranded”, there seems to be an amazing amount of detail, but it was basically just painted in with lots of little strokes after a base was set up - pretty much in the same way that we practiced in the Beginners Painter tutorial in Issue 24. To paint the strokes, I generally stuck to brushes from the Real Bristle Brushes



Fig06

collection combined with the Artists Oils. To give you a better understanding of what I mean, I have taken high-res screenshots of some parts the painting for you, here (**Fig06**).

CONCLUSION

When you are seriously interested in learning something new, try not to let others take away your fun just because they might think that they know better than you. When it comes to subjects that are new to you, such as painting a portrait for the very first time or going in-depth with landscapes, then first of all get stuck into a book first, or check out a good Wikipedia article. This will help you to find out if the input that people are giving you really contains as much knowledge as they may think it does. So find out for yourself whether the advice that people give you is going to be helpful, or whether it will simply distract you from your original goal.

ANNE POGODA [AZURELLE]

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DIGITAL ART MASTERS
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With the release of 3DTotal's latest book, 'Digital Art Masters: Volume 2', we have some exclusive chapters for you...

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This month we feature:

'Hush'
by Benita Winckler





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Hush

By Benita Winckler



Introduction

"Damp forest soil and the light of the evening sun… If you follow the old path to the mountains it will lead you to the caves of the Ylreen.. Stay silent for a while and you might get the chance to see one.."

This is one of the cuter, and more cheerful, concepts for my Eeanee project. The image shows a female shaman character and one of the ancient creatures that used to live in the woods around Aion – a Ylreen.

The artwork was created in the context of serving as a demonstration image for a basic tutorial on digital painting for *Art Scene International Magazine*.



Fig.01

Line Art and Textures

I began the work with some simple sketches in Photoshop in order to find the right composition for the piece. Once I decided upon this, I took my time working on textures for the background. This was all done with Painter in a second file. I was simply looking for rich and interesting structures, and didn't worry too much about concrete forms or anything at such an early stage. Think of it as emulating a natural painting surface – the result shouldn't scream "Digital!" in our faces. Even if most parts of this basic texture were later covered with the other elements of the image, there would still be some spots where these first brush strokes will remain visible, suggesting all of those random little details that real material surfaces exhibit.

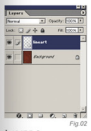


Fig.02

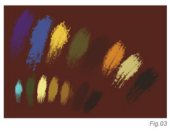


Fig.03

Layers

I took the new texture into Photoshop and made it my background layer (Fig.01). If you take a look at my layer palette (Fig.02) you can see that there were two layers, one for the line art and one for the textured background. I painted the new elements onto a third layer, which was then positioned between these two. This way my line art remained visible for as long as I needed it. Once I was happy with the results, I then merged the new layers with the background layer, so that there would be no more than four or five active layers present. Fig.03 shows the layer containing my color palette.

The following shots of the 'Hush' book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...



Fig.04

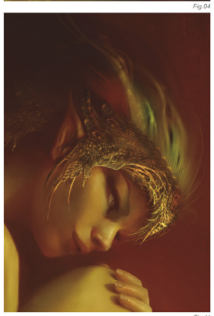


Fig.11

Tastes regarding the number of layers vary quite a bit, and every school has its own arguments – it really depends upon the occasion. If you are working for a client, it would be wise to keep your layer arrangement, as it would then be easier to change or replace major elements without affecting the entire work. Also, if the deadline starts closing in, you don't want to have repaint everything in your work just because the background color suddenly has to be orange, instead of blue.

Personally, if I am painting for my own pleasure, I tend to prefer to keep the number of layers low, as it has more of a painterly feeling to it, because your decisions are somewhat final and not that easy to undo. Furthermore, you can invite a vivid authenticity into your image by allowing for those happy accidents to occur – not everything can be planned consciously.

Painting Process

I went on to paint with Photoshop's Standard Pen Opacity Flow, which has a nice hard-edge to it, this coming in very handy during the initial stages of an image when you want to define the forms with light and shade. Chance and coincidence are still on the VIP guestlist but, until they decided to show up, I stayed with the color scheme, as shown in Fig.03.

Looking at Fig.04, you can see the first phase of the image. Most of the important questions were solved by this point. The direction of the main light source was decided, the dominant color became clearly noticeable, and I had a precise feeling for the ensuing process.

Before I painted the Ylreen as the center of interest, I refined the face of the elven girl (Fig.05 – 11). Fig.07 reveals that I decided to change the design of her ritual headdress; a less spiky, yet more feminine and soft look, suited her character much better. Never underestimate the importance of such seemingly trivial and small decisions, as they can become the key to conveying something about the character that you are working on.

In Fig.09, you can see that the line art has now been merged down and has nearly vanished underneath the layers and layers of paint. Some anatomical issues were fixed and the form of her hand was repainted completely. Fig.10 shows that, in some places, her raven black hair was showing through the feathered headdress, giving the particular area a bit more depth. For the benefit of an overall smooth and unflustered look, I omitted the preconceived hair braids (Fig.04).



Fig.05



Fig.06



Fig.07



Fig.08



Fig.09



Fig.10



Fig.12



Fig.13



Fig.14



Fig.15



Fig.16

For the background of the image I chose to feature some willow branches reaching downwards. I couldn't be bothered painting every single leaf, so I took a shortcut by creating my very own willow branch texture. Fig.12–16 detail the steps of the work in progress. Firstly, I decided on the overall form of the leaves; then I added light and shaded areas. I went on to add some minor details and then the basic texture was complete. Later on I added more individual leaves and more detail to achieve a smoother result, more pleasing to the eye.

When painting a Ylreen, or painting the leaf of a willow, the technique was nearly the same (Fig.17–23). As you can see, the painting was done in several stages, the creature being refined step by step. After finishing the work on its feathers I decided that the position of the Ylreen in the image could be improved by moving it slightly to the left and bottom of the image. Fortunately, I hadn't merged the bird at this point, so it was easy to make adjustments. Working on a separate layer, I suggested a motion blur effect at the tips of his wings (Fig.23). Then the layer with the Ylreen was merged down.



Fig.17



Fig.18



Fig.19



Fig.20



Fig.21



Fig.22



Fig.23





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"EVEN TRYING OUT A CINTIQ DIDN'T DO THE TRICK FOR ME. SO I BELIEVE THE TRUSTY OLD PEN AND PAPER TECHNIQUE STILL RULES!"

Late Afternoon

making of by Andreas Rocha

From using his trusty ballpoint pen to rough out the concept, to heading into Photoshop, Andreas Rocha shows us how he created his image “Late Afternoon” ...

Late Afternoon

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

This image started out as a way for me to try out a different technique. My usual approach to an environment is to start painting right away with large brushes and start defining the forms from there. Light, colour, perspective, values, composition – all of these aspects are decided from the beginning in a refining process. However, with this one, I wanted to approach the painting in a slightly different way...

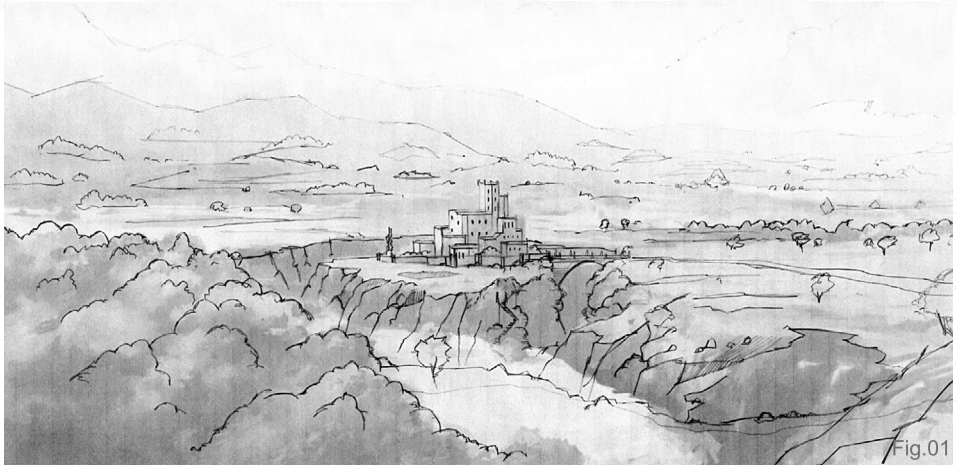

Fig.01


Fig.02

As usual I applied some quick brushstrokes, trying to find something interesting to portray. It probably took me about 10 minutes or so. I reduced the contrast, brightened up the image and printed it on normal A4 paper. With a ballpoint pen I started detailing the image I had in mind (**Fig.01**). I find that using a ballpoint pen for precise lines is much easier than doing it with a tablet, where there is a gap between hand and canvas. (Even trying out a Cintiq didn't do the trick for me, so I believe the trusty old pen and paper technique still rules!)

The result wasn't a very detailed drawing, but it allowed me to approach the laying down of colour and values in a much more confident way. I brought the image into Corel Painter,


Fig.03

copied it onto a new layer and changed its blending mode to Multiply. Working with the Loaded Palette Knife, I quickly established the initial colour harmony and the overall tone of the image (**Fig.02**). Keeping lines on top really quickens the painting process, as you don't have to worry about losing the underlying (in this case overlying) sketch and the initial lines are always apparent. I kept the contrast and overall brightness low, as the highlights I was about to add would spice up the image…


Fig.04

Adding a new layer over the line art layer, I started applying some yellowish highlights, again with the Palette Knife (**Fig.03**). Line art is good up to a point, but if you keep it present for too long it can limit your brushstrokes and cramp them. Once I was more or less satisfied with the underlying painting, the overlaying brushstrokes were not only used to brighten up the scene but also to hide the line art. The image was still a bit dull so I added a Brightness/Contrast adjustment.


Fig.05

Analyzing the image, I noticed that the perspective wasn't correct and that the plains and mountains behind the castle looked like they were on a slope. Taking the image into Photoshop I made a rough selection, cut the background and readjusted it (**Fig.04**). I also applied a warming Photo Filter to bring the colours together, and I reduced the contrast of the background mountains to add depth. The castle also got some tower upgrades to make it more vertical and interesting.

Still in Photoshop I noticed that the castle was wrongly placed in terms of composition and that I needed to make it more dynamic. So, once again, I made a selection around the castle and moved it to the left so it would stay on one of the rule of thirds divisions (**Fig.05**). The ravine


Fig.06


A.ROCHA
2008



also suffered some modifications to adapt to the new location of the castle. These were made back in Painter to keep the brushwork coherent. A yellow haze was added to the right half, indicating the position of the sun. I also returned the colour of the mountains back to their original blue.

Back in Photoshop, I created a new layer and set it to Color. I then applied bluish colours for everything that was in the shade and yellowish colours for everything being hit by the sun (**Fig.06**). The overall mood instantly changed to a late afternoon. Blue outdoor shadows really remind me of sunny, warm summer days. Some rock tips being hit by the sun also helped me to define the curve of the ravine, which in turn would help me lead the viewers' eyes to the castle.

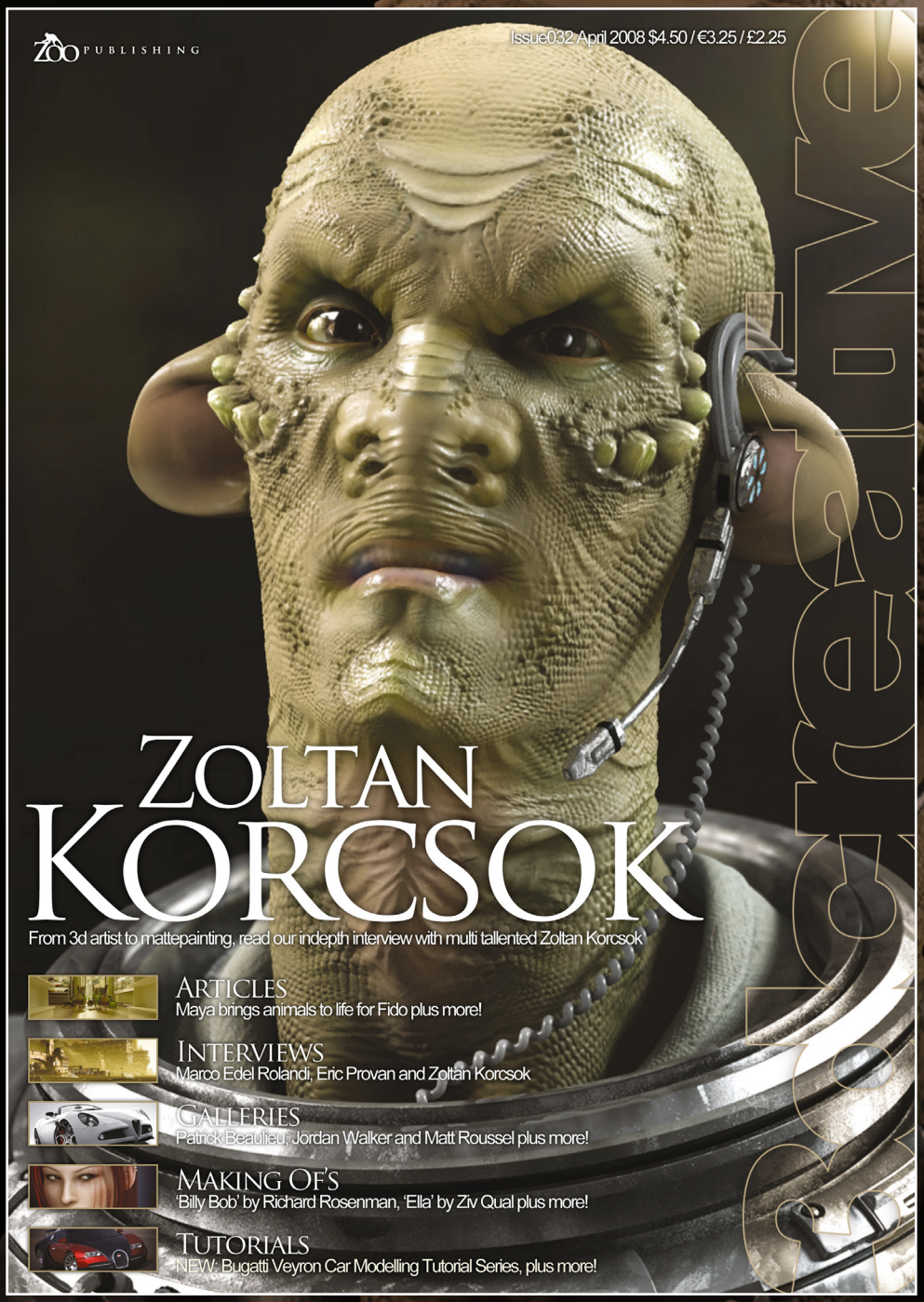
Finally, I worked on the forest in the foreground, giving it more detail and introducing highlights from the sun (**Fig.07**). Detail was smoothed out here and kept to a minimum, in order not to detract from the main theme: the castle.

ANDREAS ROCHA

For more from this artist visit:
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Fig.07

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